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Migration and identity processes among Somali immigrants in Canada

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MIGRATION AND IDENTITY PROCESSES AMONG SOMALI IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA

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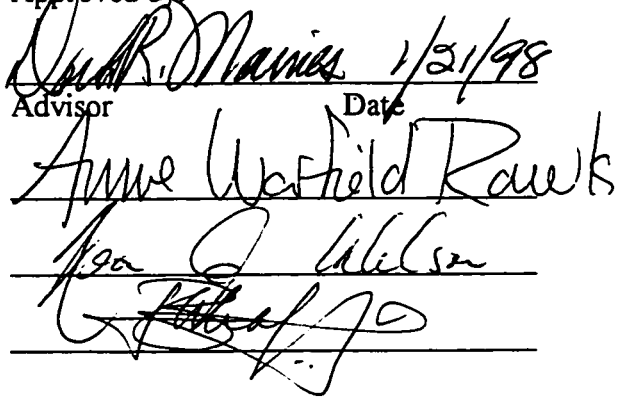

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation represents a study of migration processes of Somalis to Canada, and as such, it seeks to contribute to knowledge about the adjustment processes of relocation. In particular, it seeks to contribute to the neglected area of African refugees and immigrants to western countries. Indeed, it has been only in recent years that such studies have been conducted (Opoku-Dapph, 1995, Mouse, 1995, Selassie, 1996).

While most of those recent studies have focused on issues of resettlement (Opoku-Dapaah, 1995a; 1995b; 1995c; 1993; Selassie, 1996), gender issues, and migration (McSpadden and Moussa, 1993; Mouse, 1995), this dissertation focuses on migration as a social process and strives to understand that process in a more holistic manner. The dissertation specifically deals with the process of migration and identity challenges by focusing on the experiences of the Somali community in Canada. The experiences of this group indicate that the act of migration is a social process encompassing both the home and host environments as opposed to mere physical relocation. This study further indicates that the process of migration intrinsically involves identity challenges and transformation, and raises questions about the nature of race relations that these individuals encounter once they arrive in Canada. In other words, the process of migration, along with the historical, political, cultural, and structural conditions within which it is carried conditions the nature and the pattern of race relations that may ensue in such a way that the two processes can not be conceptually separated from one another (Blumer, 1954). It is asserted that the nature of identity processes, and the patterns of race relations that a particular immigrant group faces is conditioned by the migration

processes including both the pre-migration and post-migration contexts within which they acquire their meaning.

This dissertation is organised into six chapters that follow this introduction. Chapter two presents the overall conceptual and analytical issues related to the process of migration and identity challenges. The chapter discusses the main concepts of symbolic interactionism in terms of its epistemological and theoretical grounding of the present research. Besides the general framework of symbolic interactionism, I use several specific interactionist concepts that guide the process of data analysis. I particularly draw on Blumer's (1954) theory of race relations. This theory is especially informative for my dissertation in that the idea of race is treated as a set of social definitions that exist within a particular social structure, which in turn give racial categories their meaning. I also draw on Goffman's (1963) concept of stigma as a process of identification, as well as Blumer's concept of identity labels as a collective phenomena, Maines' (1978) concept of bodies and selves and their inherent connectedness to the process migration, Stryker's (1976) theory of identity salience, and Strauss' (1959) articulation of the process of self and identity transformations.

Chapter Three describes the methodological procedures employed in this dissertation, particularly the process of qualitative data collection, analysis, and interviewing. The chapter also includes a detailed discussion of the process of entering the field in terms of the methodological and individual obstacles, as well as the conceptual meaning of the sociological interview, sampling, the process of coding, and analysis.

Chapter four contains the first of three data analysis chapters. My interest in these chapters is to understand the relationship between the process of identity challenges and

transformations, and, in effect, the nature of identity processes and race relations between Somalis as a minority and the majority Canadians with that of the process of migration and the historical and structural conditions within which it is carried out. These chapters collectively suggest that identities, as well as the nature of any race relations, are intrinsically tied to the process of migration as well as to the structural conditions that underlie them. The guiding theoretical perspective, as I have mentioned earlier, is drawn from Blumer's theory of race relations in that it connects the idea of race relations to both individual interactions and the structural conditions that give the category its meaning. The theoretical connection between migration as a physical act and migration as a social act is derived from Maines (1978) proposition that identities migrate as much as bodies depending on the degree of identification with either the home or the host environment. The problem with Maines' proposition is that he does not discuss the fact that identification processes as well as the kind of identities encountered in the host environment are determined by the structural conditions available in the host environment and the social structural systems that immigrants carry with them. This dissertation intends to fill that gap. It is very important that I note here, though, that separating this discussion into three different chapters is merely done for heuristic purposes. As such, they must be read together as collectively articulating the kind of identities and the nature of race relations that Somali immigrants encounter, as well as the structural conditions that give rise to these outcomes.

Given the preceding discussion, Chapter four addresses a number of issues regarding the historical and cultural background of the Somali community in Toronto. The chapter includes a discussion about the causes of the Somali migration to Canada. More importantly, it discusses the nature and the kind of social identification systems that

are used by members the Somali society. It establishes the idea that racialized and ethnicized identity categories do not provide meaningful categories of social understanding in Somalia. Rather, social identifications are based on clan affiliations. These clan identifications are neither comprehensible nor comparable to the racial identity categories that Somali immigrants encounter once in Canada. The discussion of the differential social identification systems between Canada and Somalia is very important in that it provides a basis for the nature of perceived identity devaluation and counter-devaluation that Somalis engage once in Canada.

In chapter five, the discussion shifts from the historical and structural undercurrents of the Somali experience to the process of migration. The main concern in this chapter centers around two sets of interrelated issues. The first set of issues pertains to the question of why and how people migrate from one location to another. The second set pertains to the encounters and obstacles that individuals face while actually migrating to Canada. These sets of issues are seen to form the two main pillars within which the process of migration can be described and understood. The migration process is analysed in terms of the motives for migration, migration chains and routes, migration networks, return migration, and finally, the process of refugee determination.

Chapter six provides a detailed description of the process of identity challenges as well as the nature of race relations from the vantagepoint of the Somali community in Toronto. The main question raised in this chapter is, "how do people from societies that do not employ racialized identity categories in their everyday interaction deal with identity categories and challenges encountered in a racially categorised society?" The nature of this differentiated identity is also seen to underlie the nature of race relations that exist in such conditions. This chapter brings several issues that are important for the

understanding of migration processes and identity encounters. The discussion of identity encounters is organised around identity categories employed by Somalis in their homeland environment, the kinds of identity categories that Somalis encounter once they arrive in Canada, Somali perceptions of how they are perceived by the Canadian majority group, and how Somalis perceive the majority group. The discussion of Somalis' perception of themselves, how they are perceived, and in turn, how they perceive the Canadian majority is conceptualised under what I refer to as identity devaluation and counter-devaluation and is related to Goffman's concept of stigma. The main conclusion reached in this chapter is that the racialized identity categories employed within the Canadian social structure are incomprehensible to Somalis and vice versa. This condition leads me to raise the question of "who stigmatises whom?" rendering Goffman's idea of stigma non-applicable, at least as it relates to the experiences of the Somali community in Canada. However, the chapter supports Blumer's theory of race relations, which is something that I will discuss in detail in chapter six as well as in the concluding chapter.

The final chapter elevates the empirical data discussed in the preceding chapters to a more abstract conceptual level. That is, the central conceptual elements used throughout the dissertation are brought together. Using Blumer's theory of race relations, Goffman's concept of stigma, and Maines' articulation of the process of bodies and selves migration, I basically try to put the three levels of the dissertation together. These levels, as we will see later, are the historical and cultural aspects of the Somali society prior to migration, the migration process, and how these two levels affect identity processes and therefore the kind of race relations that may result from such processes. I conclude this chapter by discussing the overall contribution of this dissertation and implications for future research. These contributions fall into three main categories. The first pertains to issues

of research on African immigrants in North America. The second pertains to international migration in terms of both the conceptual distinctions between refugees and immigrants as far as behaviour is concerned and in terms of the conceptualisation of migration as a social process. The third part pertains to identity process and race relations. In this section, I will bring in the relevance of Goffman's concept of stigma and Blumer's theory of race relations in terms of their relevance for the this dissertation as well as David Maines' concept of bodies and selves. Finally, I will close this chapter with a discussion of the implications for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the theoretical perspectives and existing literature that provide the framework for the dissertation. It must be noted, though, that theory here is not perceived as a mechanism to test concepts or variables. Rather, theory is used as a guide and a framing tool that can provide a road map, so to speak, for the phenomenon under study. Thus, given my interest in migration as processual phenomena, I am convinced that symbolic interactionsim has sufficient conceptual capacity for understanding the experiences and obstacles that immigrants face in their movement from one location to another and their subsequent outcomes.

The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section will discuss symbolic interactionsim as a theoretical perspective and will rely primarily on the views of Herbert Blumer. The main concepts that will be discussed are situation, interaction, identity, and the transformation of identity. Other concepts that will be discussed within the first section include Goffman's treatment of stigma and social identities and Maines' discussion of migration and identity. The second section will present a selective review of the literature and other relevant concepts that have emerged within migration and refugee studies. The main ideas that are discussed in this area include voluntary and involuntary migration, push-pull theory, assimilation, ethnic resilience, dual economy, and segmented labor market.

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

There is a strong consensus that symbolic interactionism as a theoretical

framework originated out of pragmatism.[1] Pragmatism, according to Maines (1992), is an attempt to reconcile the incompatibilities between philosophical idealism and realism whereby reality is either conceived as residing only in human experiences in the form of perceptions and ideas, or as existing in the form of, to borrow from Durkheim, "social facts" independent of human experiences. In other words, pragmatism does not dwell either in the subjectivism or the objectivism of ideas. Rather, it focuses on social processes and their consequences. On that note, James, [1948:142] wrote that, "The pragmatist method in such cases is to try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences", and continued to say,

> "What differences would it make to any one if this notion rather that notion were true? If no practical differences whatever can be traced... then all dispute is idle".

Maines (1992) also suggests that in pragmatism, the distinction between subject and object is rejected and replaced with the idea that the knower and the known are realised through, and in, ongoing social experiences.

Thus, it was within this historical and theoretical climate that the idea of social interactionism came into existence. Charles H. Cooley and George H. Mead specifically elaborated it respectively. Cooley (1902), for example, tried to correct the individualistic tendencies of William James by introducing interaction in the process of attaining the

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[1] According to William James ([1948:142], " The term is derived from the Greek word meaning action from which our words, "practice" and "practical" come. It was introduced to philosophy by Mr. Charles Pierce in 1878. In an article entitled, " How to Make our Ideas Clear," in the Popular Science Monthly for January of that year". However, Farberman, and Perinbanayagan (1985) suggest that whether it was James himself, or Pierce that introduced pragmatism is not clear. They point out that Pierce himself has sent a note asking James, "who originated the term pragmatism to which James replied you invented pragmatism. However, they continue to suggest that James himself laid the theoretical basis of pragmatism in that same year. Nonetheless, despite who actually invented the concept, there is still considerable consensus that it provided the foundation within which symbolic interactionism was found.

social self. According Farberman (1985), Cooley pointed out that the social self results from the interaction that goes on between individuals in the now well-known process of the "looking glass self" and primary groups through developmental stages. However, the question still remained. As Pfuetze ([1954:79], quoted in Franks, 1985:45) put it, "How do individuals "get into" the experience of others so as to experience "from the other side" and become objects to themselves?[2] It was Mead who elaborated on the concept of self as a social process by distinguishing insignificant gestures from significant gestures. The difference between the two behaviors is that within the insignificant gestures, there is no intervening process between stimulus and responses, while in the significant gestures, a reflexive or interpretative process is involved through what Mead referred to as role taking.

Symbolic Interactionism: Herbert Blumer

The guiding principal in symbolic interactionism lies in the proposition that both society and the self must be treated as a process rather than structure. That is, social relations and structure are seen not only as fixed and stable, but also as open and subject to negotiation through interaction and adjustment to situations. According to Blumer (1969:2), symbolic interactionism rests on three principles.

> The first premise is that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that things have for them. The second premise is that the meanings of such things is derived from, or arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person

[2] Anne Rawls (1996) has recently provided an interpretation of Durkheim's Elementary Forms in which she argues that Durkheim has provided an epistemology based on "socioempiricism that can replace the gap between thought and reality. According to Rawls, people can get into the experience of others through shared enacted practices. These shared practices provide a generalized category of understanding for those who are involved in the enactment of that practice, a process that Durkheim elaborated through his analysis of religious practices.

used in dealing with the things that he encounters.

What seems to appear from these premises is the importance of action, interaction, and meaning. The process of reaching a meaningful understanding is achieved through interpretation. Following Mead's distinction between significant gestures and non-significant gestures, and reformulating them as "significant" and "non significant symbols", Blumer differentiates interaction without meaning and interaction that entails meaning.[3] In this way Blumer articulates the process by which meaning is achieved through symbolic interaction. This process, according Blumer, is achieved through role taking in that "The parties to such interaction must necessarily take each other's roles" (1969:9).

But Blumer does not limit his ideas merely to individuals aligning their actions to each other. Rather, he points out that these individual actions can at times culminate in what he refers to as the "joint action". A joint action, according to Blumer,

> " ...while made up of diverse components that enter into its formation, is different from any one of them, and from their mere aggregation. The joint action has a distinctive character of its own right, a character that lies in the articulation or linkages as apart from what may be articulated or linked. (1969:20)

Here Blumer does not deny the structural aspects of social life. Furthermore, he suggests that joint actions provide both horizontal and vertical linkages to the larger social systems. Vertical linkages refer to the process by which previous joint actions contribute to the nature and dynamics of present joint action. Horizontal linkages refer to the process by which on going joint actions are informed by the prevailing norms, structures,

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[3] This separation is achieved through the distinction between human beings and animals in that animals react without interpretation, while human beings engage in an interpretive process whereby they can become objects to themselves and to others.

and values of that moment. This statement amounts to the explicit recognition of not only the structural aspects of social life, but also to the historical antecedents of all social actions in determining both society and the self (Blumer, 1969).

However, what Blumer refuses is the conception of automatic Parsonian need-and-function based institutions entailing some inner dynamics and system requirements. Instead, Blumer makes the argument that institutions function and exist because " people at different points do something, and what they do is a result of how they define the situation in which they are called on to act" (1969:19).

Thus Blumer's argument does not deny the institutional and structural aspects of the society (Blumer, 1990; see also Maines, 1988; 1989). Rather, he cautions sociologists not to believe that institutions are "sui genres", and he paves the way for the understanding that institutions are, like meaning, the result of social interaction. In fact, he points out that institutions can stabilise and provide frameworks within which interacting individuals organise their actions and counter-actions through the barriers such as the values that institutions impose. That is, these institutions may impose some structure in the way interactions may develop. But they do not cause the way individuals in the society interact with each other. Blumer makes this point by treating industrialisation as an agent of social interaction than it is direct cause. By social agent, Blumer means the identification of some mechanisms and processes that mobilise identifiable change (Blumer, 1990; see also Maines and Morriane 1990). What Blumer argues is that the understanding of the relationship between social interactions and institutional barriers depend on whether causal mechanism and direction is assumed, that is, whether one level is assumed to cause the other or not. For Blumer, the relationship between individual interactions and social structures is not a cause-effect situation. Institutions do not cause individual interaction. Rather, they are better perceived as agents that provide an umbrella, so to speak, in which the process of interaction is carried out and adjusted to. These adjustments must be explained in terms of not what institution do

to interactions; but rather, in how individuals and groups interpret situations that are created by institutions and adjust to that (Blumer, 1990).

Despite the fact the Blumer achieved a considerable influence in sociology, he was always the center of controversy (Shibutani, 1988). The center of this controversy has been, among others, the alleged incapacity of symbolic interactionism to account for social organisation (Reynolds and Reynolds, 1973) and for being purely subjectivist (Warshay and Warshay, 1986). As a result of these criticisms, symbolic interactionists were more or less pushed to explicate the interactionist perspective on social organisation. Accordingly, many symbolic interactionists have tried to further elaborate on the social organisational aspects of interaction (Strauss, 1959, 1978; Denzin, 1977, Maines, 1977; 1979a; 1982; Fine and Kleinman, 1983; Hall, 1987). Fine and Kleinman (1983) suggest, for example, that social networks may be a concept that symbolic interactionists could use in order to link individual behaviors to the larger social systems. Hall (1987) suggests six analytical categories designed to accomplish the same goal: collective activity, network, conventions-practice, resources, processuality-temporality, and grounding. The articulation of the relevance of social structures among symbolic interactionists started in the late 1950's (Maines and Charelton, 1985)[4]. The first systematic articulation, of the relevance of the larger social structures within symbolic interactionism was provided as what has became known as the "negotiated order" (Strauss, 1959, 1978) and later as meso-structure (Maines, 1979a, 1982). Taken together, the negotiated order and the meso-structure present approaches that can account for the relationships between the individual and the social structure without at the same time creating a dualism between the two. Strauss (1978) provides three principle concepts in

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[4] According to Maines and Charelton (1985:273), prior to the 1950's, "Although not sharply developed, the symbolic interactionist tradition has conveyed a view of social organization which has consistently rested on the recognition of their dialectical nature of society." This statement points out that symbolic interactionism, unlike its critics, has had the root framework within which the larger social structures can be articulated.

which the process by which the relationship between structure and the individual can be understood simultaneously. The first concept is negotiation and refers to the actual interactions between individuals. The second concept is the negotiation context, and refers to the context within which the negotiation takes place. And the third, the structural context refers to the larger transcending situation in which both the negotiation and the context are conditioned by. Taken together, these three concepts provide a powerful conceptual image in which the relationship between the individual and the structure can be comprehended.

The meso-structure approach (Maines, 1982) further provides three central concepts by which the relationship between interacting individuals and the surrounding larger social contexts can be articulated. According to Maines, the first concept is segmentation and refers to the segmented interactions that form group-specific concerns and interests. In other words, segmentation refers to those interactions and activities that compartmentalise society into what Maines refers to as "focused realm of conduct". The second concept is mediation, which recognises the fact that all realities are always socially mediated. The third concept is temporality in that social realities and interactions are cumulative process and occur within and through time. Taken together, the negotiated order and the meso-structure approaches provide not only the process by which segmented interactions can be connected to the larger processes, but simultaneously reject duality in that the lines of influence are seen as going between the individual and the society in a dialectical manner.

Stigma and Social Identities[5]

The term stigma was used by Goffman (1963) to refer to social attributes that are

[5] According to Goffman (1963:1), the term Stigma was originated by the Greeks to refer to bodily signs that expose something "unusual and bad about the moral status of the signifier".

socially discrediting. However, according to Goffman, sometimes attributes that stigmatise one type of possessor can be non-stigmatising and normal in other situations. Thus, stigma is regarded as a relationship between an attribute and the stereotype that corresponds to it. In this view, Goffman suggests that an attribute is neither credible nor discredible in itself, but that it is determined by the stereotype that accompanies it. Nevertheless, Goffman divides society into normal and stigmatised groups and then develops his analysis along these lines. Based on this distinction, Goffman's empirical concern becomes "How does the stigmatised person respond to his situation?" (1963:9). In order to answer this question, Goffman created several conceptual and analytical categories including passing, deviance disavowal, disclaimers, and covering to account for how individuals deal with their stigmatised and/or spoiled identities. The particular strategy used depends on whether the stigma is visible or not.

However, the problem with Goffman's conceptualisation is the assumption of the existence of analytically distinguishable stigmatised groups and normals. As Goffman (1963:127) writes, "It can be assumed that a necessary condition for social life is the sharing of a single set of normative expectations". Goffman assumes that these distinctions are givens and concentrates, as I have mentioned earlier, on the processes by which stigmatised groups engage in information control in order to affect positive social identities. Of course, Goffman concedes that the stigma-normals distinction is not always clear and that at times is historically conditioned. To this, Goffman writes, "However, the perceived undesirability of a particular property, and its capacity to trigger off these stigma-normal processes, has a history of its own, a history that is regularly changed by purposeful action" (1969:138). In other instances, Goffman points out the existence of situations where some groups who are considered as stigmatised actually consider the normals as the ones who are stigmatised. To that end Goffman writes,

> Also, it seems possible for an individual to fail to live up to what we effectively demand of him, and yet be relatively untouched by his failure; isolated by his

> elimination, protected by identity beliefs of his own, he feels he is a full fledged normal human being, and that we are the ones who are not quite human" (1969:138).

Given these statements, this dissertation makes the general argument that while it is justifiably sound to generally assume the existence of stigma-normal distinctions and to concentrate on how stigmatised groups manage, to use Goffman's phrase, information given off in order to affect positive identities. It is unacceptable to ignore Goffman's argument regarding other dimensions about the complex relationship between self and social identities as a result of interactions between individuals. In other words, little attention has been paid either to the possibility that the process of stigma-normal relations are historically conditioned, and that at some points, those we consider stigmatised do in fact counter us with their own belief that the normals are in fact the stigmatised ones. The process of stigma can also be applied to groups, as Blumer points out that:

> "The interpretation of him might be different than what you call the label, particularly when it is done to a group of people, because they can talk among themselves about how they have been characterised, and offset, let us say to use Erving's term, they can offset whatever stigma may be involved in that area. What you have to realise is that individuals are in a position of interpreting the gestures of others and the acts of others. And where those gestures and acts of others are directed toward one, what you have to put your finger on is not what the gestures are but how the individuals interpret those gestures."
> (quoted in Maines, 1997:151)

Bodies and Selves

Matters of stigma obviously imply matters of identity, which, according to Maines (1978), are intrinsic to migration. As he succinctly states, *identities migrate every bit as much as bodies* (1978:242, emphasise in original). Maines distinguishes bodies from identities in the migration process in that bodies are defined as physical existence, while identities are seen as the social categories by which individuals are located and given meaning. With this distinction, Maines makes the argument that the social component--

that is, the identity--of human migrations must also be effectively studied if we are to get a clearer picture of the migration process. In order to do that, Maines provides four analytical situations in which either bodies and identities migrate together, or one where the other lags behind, a situation that can create identity problems for immigrants. This distinction also provides a framework in which the types of migration can be effectively studied.

The first analytical category is the point where both bodies and identities migrate. This situation applies to the ideal immigrant who plans the movement in advance. The second situation is where the body does not migrate but the identity does. This is a situation where the immigrant desires to go to another country but faces some barriers. The third situation pertains to when the body migrates but the identity doesn't migrate. This analytical category is very important, at least for this dissertation, in that it can contribute to the theoretical distinction of immigrants from refugees. The fourth analytical category is when neither body nor identity migrates. This analytical situation is what Maines refers to as "immobility". However, what is lacking from Maines' argument is the situational context within which identities migrate, or which identity among the many identities available for the individual may migrate with bodies. The kind of identity that may migrate with the body depends on the circumstance found in the new situation. Of course, Maines discusses the relationship between situations and which identity (s) migrate with the body. As he puts it:

> We have many identities, however, and in considering matters of migration, it therefore becomes important to determine which identities accompany the body, which ones precede it, which ones lag behind, and which ones are created in the overall process....Our identities, in other words, can be thought of as being in different phased relationships with our bodies depending upon the distribution of meaning in social relationships, differential enmeshment in social worlds, the degree of activity in our various lines of communication, and the strengths of the identification process which underlay all of it" (1978:257).

Despite the above statement, though, Maines does not incorporate a situational analysis into his analytical framework in the process of body and identity migration. This dissertation will try to include a situational analysis in the process by examining which identities migrate with the bodies and under what circumstance they acquire salience in the new environment.

Identity Transformation

Unlike psychological conceptualisations of the development of self and identity, Strauss (1959) suggests that identities must be understood through the process by which adult persons are struck by changes in their sense of identity as they move from one situation to another within and between social structures. This conceptualisation of the process of identity transformation through changes fits very well with my dissertation in that, as I pointed out earlier, it concerns the process of migration and identity transformation. According to Strauss, identity transformations are ignited by what he calls "turning points". A turning point, for example, can be a change of relationships with others such family and friends. This change in relations can result from migration. However, one can not recognise this transformation unless there is a turning point to reflect upon. Strauss uses the experiences of immigrants in America who later visit their old country and realise that they no longer have affinities with the people there. Other turning points include conversion from one religion to another, the acceptance of professional identities, and so forth. Strauss also contributes to the discussion of identity by pointing out that language and naming are acts of identity assignments, which place and locate individuals who are assigned with these names. Names also work as categories that assign qualities and classifications among human individuals:

> "to name is not only to indicate; it is to identify an object as some kind of object. An act of identification requires that the thing referred to be placed with a category" (Strauss, 1959:19).

Gregory Stone (1962) contributes further to the discussion of identity by introducing appearance as an important aspect of identity formation. He argues that self and identity are established and maintained by the communication of appearance as much as they are through discourse. This argument is very important in that a large number of the Somali immigrants in Toronto, particularly women, wear the Islamic Hijab which can be an appearance which may locate and classify them in certain manners.

This section provided the theoretical perspectives employed in this study. I have articulated several symbolic interactionist concepts as well as the general framework of symbolic interaction theory. The next section will be devoted to discussing both the theoretical concepts and empirical concerns that pertain to the process of migration and adjustment as found in the literature on migration and ethnicity.

MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT THEORIES

Classical economists conceptualized migration theory through cost-benefit analyses of perceived advantages and disadvantages based on factors related to origin and destination environments (Bailey, 1994; Massey, 1994). Later, some sociologists emphasized the importance of intervening variables (obstacles) that may handicap some individuals more than others (Lee, 1966). Lee argued that all migration involves origin-related variables, destination-related ones, and an intervening set of obstacles. Accordingly, the decision to migrate was seen as being influenced by four factors: 1) those associated with the area of origin; 2) those associated with the area of destination; 3) intervening obstacles; and 4) personal factors. These obstacles, according to Lee, include physical distance, personal traits such as age, information, contact with earlier immigrants, and cost.

Nonetheless, despite the introduction and the importance of the intervening variables, classical migration theory remained at the individual motivation level influenced by the push factors of the home environment and the pull factors of the

country of choice (Maines, 1978). As such, according to some scholars, classical migration theory conceptualized at the individual motivation level fails to distinguish immigrants from refugees (Kunz, 1973; 1981; Rose, 1981; 1986; 1993).

Immigrants versus Refugees

The overall understanding of refugees is derived from the 1951 definition of the United Nations, which provided the following:

> an individual who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country or nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article 1)

Thus, it is the assumed fear of persecution resulting from some political, ethnic, and religious conflicts that mainly guides the distinction between refugees and immigrants. This definition works well where issues of policy formulation are concerned because it allows each host country to decide whom to admit. The idea of who is admitted and who is not is tied to what is generally known as the "criteria for admission". But, criteria for admissions are strained by overriding economic and political considerations, as mentioned earlier.

Beyond this general policy-related distinction between refugees and immigrants, the designation of refugee conjures up images of helplessness and provides a picture of refugees as an indistinguishable congregation of individuals without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, education and social class. This identification of 'just refugee' creates frustrations and anger among people designated as such. MacSpadden and Mousa (1993: 210), for instance, write that:

> The frustration, tension, despair, and anger which the Ethiopians and Eritreans experience in being as 'just refugee' is expressed by both men and women in the remark(Sim Alene in Amharic

> and Sim Alone in Tigrigna). This resort is used when one has been insulted, demeaned, or not treated respectfully. It has the meaning of I am a person.

Theoretically, the refugee/immigrant distinction has been conceptualized under what Hien (1993) referred to as "realist versus nominalist." The first perspective views violence and exile as definitive of the refugee experience. According to the realist perspective, refugees constitute a political form of immigration and immigrants an economic form. The later considers the concept of refugee to be a social construction because economic conditions cannot be distinguished from the political conditions that lead to migration. As a result, research employing the social constructionist perspective does not separate immigrants from refugees. For instance, Alejandro Portes and his associates, who arguably have produced some of the most persistent findings about immigrant communities, make no distinction between refugees and immigrants. The subjects of almost all research done by Portes and his associates are based on the Cuban refugees in Miami. However, his findings were generalized to groups considered as immigrants such as Mexicans, Koreans, and Caribbean communities all over the United States and Canada. The assumption behind this cross comparison, within the constructionist perspective, in general is based on what is known as the "world system theory" which suggests that since both refugees and immigrants flow from the less developed countries to the more developed ones, economic development and conditions are inseparable from refugees and political situations.

Beyond this refugee/immigrant distinction, though, it is safe to assume that the migration process itself generates a profound social disorganization. Recent findings have further confirmed these processes of disorganization in several aspects of immigrant communities, including but limited to differential adjustments (Gold, 1989), downward occupational mobility (Gold, 1992; Lam, 1995), ethnic identity problems (Field, 1994), and so forth. Moreover, these assumed distinctions between refugees and immigrants give the impression that the idea of migration is more of a structural than processual

matter.

Nevertheless, the literature on migration has recently been dominated by the distinction between refugees and immigrants. This is especially problematic, though, for a region like the Horn of Africa, where political instabilities produce economic instabilities that constantly blur the distinction between immigrants and refugees. Individuals in such situations move between the self-imposed definition between refugees and immigrants depending on the situation they are in. For example, during the 1978 war between Ethiopia and Somalia, individuals from the Somali republic could claim that they were from the predominantly Somali southeastern region of Ethiopia. The authenticity of such claims cannot be verified because national boundaries in Africa are ambiguous and the same ethnic group can be found in two or more countries simultaneously. Thus, Somalis can claim that they are simultaneously from Kenya and Ethiopia. This situation, though, is not confined to Somalia and Somalis alone, since other countries in Africa and Asia have the same ethnic distributions, That is, some ethnic groups are found in two or more countries. Thus, when a political situation arises in one country, some groups from a neighboring country can claim that they are from that country in order to qualify for refugee status. Furthermore, some individuals who have left Somalia prior to the Somali civil war claimed refugee status in the United States and Canada on the basis that they could not return to Somalia.

The designation of refugee status can also become a complex issue constrained by the political and social climate of the host country. For example, in the 1970's and 1980's Haitians claiming refugee status were returned to Haiti despite reported atrocities on the assumption that their home situation was more economic than political in nature, while claims from Cuban individuals were accepted with no trouble. In his 1992 presidential address to the Eastern Sociological Society, Peter Rose (1993) wrote:

> Consider the first week of 1992 when a group of middle-class Cubans commandeered a helicopter, and flew to Miami seeking and obtaining political asylum while thousands of Haitian boat people, also claiming to be fleeing

> oppression, were interdicted, apprehended, incarcerated, and denied it. A month later a number of them were put aboard ships and returned to an uncertain future....despite the fact that many had been actively involved in opposing the coup that toppled their legitimately elected president (p.15).

Moreover, refugees, like immigrants, have a great deal of choice in the decision surrounding when and where to migrate. One Somali refugee from Opoku-Dapaah's study in Toronto responded to an interview question like this:

> We both recognized that things were getting worse...so we decided to leave. I got a visa from the United States Embassy and stayed in Washington for four days. My sister she said," Don't stay anywhere else." Canada is the best place besides our country. Please come to me. Canada is a very good country, very good people...When I was still back home, she called me and said, "you know", it is time for you to leave before it is too late. (Opoku-Dapaah, 1995:190).

This statement attests to the existence of choice and kinship networks in the refugee migration process. It also shows that the respondent made a clear choice between the United States and Canada. Other sources also suggest the importance of kinship networks in the decisions of when and where to migrate among refugee communities. For example, one in five of the Indochinese refugees in Thailand were persuaded by relatives and friends to migrate (Institute of Asian Studies, quoted in Hien, 1993). Portes and Back (1985) also report that Cuban refugees arriving in the United States in the 1960's averaged eight relatives and friends already in the United States. Thus, according to Hien (1993:49), "refugees use kin and friendship networks to navigate their passage to host society just as immigrants do".

It is true that civil and political instabilities create massive displacements, but those displacements are initially limited to border countries. Once refugees reach neighboring countries, the movement from there is as much an individual choice as it is structurally induced. For example, once Somali refugees reach Kenya and Ethiopia, their further migration to a host country is determined by individual differences in terms of age, education, class, and the availability of kin and friendship who can facilitate their navigation to a third country.

Of course, there are those who reach third countries through refugee camps, but these are a very small minority, at least in the Somali case. The majority of Somali refugees in neighboring countries live among the local communities and receive their financial support from their relatives already in Europe and North America. Thus, the image of refugees fleeing wide-eyed from political wars through refugee camps at the mercy of non-governmental agencies and finally in a safe haven at a large European or North American city is more complex than it looks on the surface. In fact, the assumption that even immigrants are individuals who can choose when and where to go is very misleading, as Richmond (1995:55) suggests:

> the distinction between forced and free and voluntary and involuntary is a misleading one. All human behavior is constrained...However, degrees of freedom may vary. Individual and group autonomy and potency are situationally determined.

The most notable theoretical articulation of refugees as a "distinct social type" was provided by Kunz (1973; 1981; see also, Keller, 1975). The key assumption behind Kunz's model is his contention that the push-pull theory fails to account for the experiences of refugees. However, Kunz conceptualized this problem through a perceived difference between refugees and immigrants. According to Kunz, the "... refugee moves from his homeland to the country of his settlement against his will" (p.130). Based on this assumption, Kunz modified the push-pull theory and replaced it with what he calls a "push-pressure" model. This means that while immigrants are pushed from their homelands and pulled to a more economically desirable location, refugees are pushed through a sudden pressure and pulled to nowhere. That is, given the choice, refugees will remain in their homelands. This is so because refugees are not poor people who have failed within their homelands. They, in fact, may be prominent and successful people who are only pushed by the fear of persecution (Stein, 1981). Having theoretically distinguished immigrants from refugees, Kunz focuses on the differences within refugee groups and individuals. According to Kunz, the flight and resettlement of refugees

conforms to two basic "kinetic" types defined as anticipatory refugees movements and acute refugee movements. The anticipatory type senses danger beforehand and leaves home before the political situation prevents an orderly departure. As such, anticipatory refugee movements may be confused with free immigrants, but they are still refugees (Kunz, 1973, Stein, 1981). In contrast, acute refugee movement's result from an overwhelming push, and migration follows only after the situation has deteriorated to an intolerable point which is the classical refugee type upon which most current research is based.

Keller (1975) reasserted the social distinctiveness of refugees and provided a typology of refugee experiences conceptualized in terms of what he calls "stage(s) of refugeeism" based on several assumptions. Key to these assumptions are: the causes of dislocation, individual understanding of the causes, the amount of warning and mental preparedness, the degree of violence, and, finally, the speed within which refugees are resettled. He then provides a refugee typology conceptualized in terms of stages of refugee experiences. These stages are the perception of threat, the onset of danger and the decision to flee, the period of extreme danger and flight, camp behavior, repatriation, early and late stages of resettlement, adjustment and acculturation, and finally, residual stages in behavior caused by the experience. This process is seen to create the currently well accepted characterization of refugees in terms of their perceived mental instability such as vulnerability, guilt, aggression, and other psychologically situated behaviors that may or may not disappear with time.

Following Keller's outline, Stein (1981) discusses the settlement characteristics of refugees. He divides the settlement process into the following: 1) The initial arrival period and the first two months; 2) the first and the second years; 3) after four to five years; 4) a decade or more. The initial arrival period is said to be characterized by occupational and status downward plunge, loss of identity and values and psychological strains, including nostalgia, depression, anxiety, guilt, and frustration resulting from a

politically motivated sudden departure. This is followed by a period of an overt drive to recover through language improvement and retraining programs. After four or five years, according to Stein, the adjustment process stabilizes. However, if opportunities are not realized by this time, discouragement sets in and the refugee relinquishes all attempts to improve his or her life.

The above typologies suggest that refugees can be considered as a distinct sociological type that is both theoretically and empirically distinguishable from voluntary immigrants. This distinction is attributable to the supposedly observable fact that political upheavals, persecution, and ethnic and religious conflicts produce refugees. This situation is further assumed to lead to generalized strain and psychological traumas, which in turn handicaps the process of adaptation and adjustment to new environments. These assumptions and conclusions have contributed to the emergence of the new discursive domain of Refugee Studies. For example, the 1980's saw the establishment of the influential Refugee Studies Program at the University of Oxford. A few years later, the first academic journal dedicated to the study of refugees as a distinct discursive domain was established. It was during this time too that the generalized refugee label started to appear more frequently (Malkki, 1995).

MIGRATION AND ETHNICITY

The Assimilation Model

Research about immigrants and racial minorities is an area of study as old as the social sciences in America (Park, 1928; Park and Burgess, 1921; Thomas and Znaniecki, 1927; Handlin, 1951). These scholars were affiliated with the "Chicago School" which laid down the foundation for much of the writings about race and ethnicity in the United States (Pedraza, 1994; Richmond, 1994;). In Canada, the influence of the "Chicago School" was present in the works of Carl Dawson and Everett Hughes who founded the Sociology Department at McGill University in Montreal (Richmond, 1994). The most

influential sociologist, though, was Robert Park. Park developed the notion of the "race cycle" in which he conceptualised group interaction through stages starting with conflict, competition, accommodation, and ending with eventual assimilation. Thus, for the early Chicago School, the overall experience of immigrants in the New World was seen as a problem of adjustment that resulted from family and community disorganisation inherent in the process of a group being uprooted. This disorganisation was seen as a temporary process thought to disappear once immigrants merged themselves into the larger society (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1927).

In reaction to the shortcomings of Park's "race cycle" to account for the diverse assimilation processes of the wide variety of ethnic groups in America, especially the Jewish, eastern and southern Europeans, and Blacks, Gordon (1963) articulated seven dimensions within which the assimilation process of immigrant groups can be conceptualized. He divided the seven variables into two related but distinct dimensions: those that can be seen as the causes and consequences of the extent of assimilation, and those that can be seen as the separate but interdependent sub-processes of which assimilation is constituted (Yinger, 1985). The first three causal variables are absence of prejudice, absence of discrimination, and absence of value and power conflict. The latter variables are integration, acculturation, identification, and amalgamation. According to Yinger (1985), integration can be defined as the extent to which immigrants are incorporated into a society in a distributive manner across the social clubs and institutions of the population as a whole. Acculturation is conceived as the degree to which the values and norms of the immigrants correspond to those of the society at large. The last two variables, identification and amalgamation, are respectively defined as the extent to which the immigrant identifies with the larger society and the extent to which the visible physical characteristics of the immigrant group are similar to those of the core group. However, the most important analytical dimension of Gordon's types of assimilation lies in his distinction between cultural and structural assimilation. According to Gordon,

structural assimilation is the basis of any successful assimilation. Once this structural assimilation is achieved, all other dimensions will follow (p.80-81). Despite these important distinctions, and the fact that assimilation was seen as more complex than had been hitherto articulated, Gordon nevertheless hypothesized the eventual assimilation of immigrant groups, as did Robert Park, at least in the experiences of those of the European origin.

The most important study along the lines of Gordon's assimilation framework was Herbert Gan's The Urban Villagers (1962). Based on data from second and third generation Italian immigrant Americans, he concluded that Italian immigrants were culturally assimilated, in that they spoke English and felt little attachment to Italy, but not structurally assimilated because social interaction remained confined to their Italian American families and neighborhoods. If this conclusion is considered, the assimilation process of what has come to be known as the new immigrants, that is, the racially more visible immigrant groups, will undoubtedly be more difficult. It is this realization that has led to what is today known as the ethnic resilience models.

The Ethnic Resilience Model

The ethnic resilience models started with the publication of Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynahan's *Beyond the Melting Pot* (1963). Glazer and Moynahan challenged existing assimilation models, and argued that ethnicity was still very much important for much of the Catholic Southern and Eastern Europeans and other ethnic groups in New York City. They contended that groups, which maintained ethnic solidarity, were in a much better position to compete in America's largest cities.

More recently, however, sociological theories of migration research have applied the concepts of dual economy and segmented labor markets. The basic assumption behind the dual economy concept is the assertion that capitalist economy in general is divided into two tiers referred to as the primary and secondary sectors. The primary

sector is characterized by stable employment, higher wages, and opportunities for advancement. The secondary sector, on the other hand, is characterized by low wages, lack of job security and status advancement. In a recent review chapter on migration research, Morowski (1990:199) suggested that that research employing the dual economy model has produced two theses:

> The first is that above and beyond the human capital possessed by individuals, their differential insertion into the labor market means access to unequal opportunities. The second is that in the secondary sector of the economy, workers are hired primarily on the basis of their ethnicity, a fact that significantly affects the rewards they receive for their labor thereby suppressing the impact of human capital investment.

Along the lines of the dual economy, Bonacich (1972) applied the concept of split labor market to differentiate between secondary and primary labor markets demarcated along ethnic lines. A year later, he employed Blalock's (1967) concept of "middleman minorities" which refers to an intermediate economic position between manufacturers and consumers in some cases and/or between elite and masses in other cases. Middleman minorities start as sojourners characterized by a strong attachment to a homeland. These attachments create thriftiness and a strong willingness to forgo short-term pleasure in order to save money for future investments. According to Bonacich, "They are here to make money, not to spend" (1973:585). Thus, the general contention of the middleman minority business is that this sojourning pattern of migration found among some ethnic groups encourages reactive solidarity, which simultaneously facilitates a middleman minority business within the mainstream economy. The middleman minority concept is mainly guided by perceptions of discrimination and hostility from the host community towards some ethnic groups. For example, in a case study of the Japanese American community before World War II, Bonacich and Modall (1985) claimed that a theoretical interaction between ethnic solidarity, small business concentration, and societal hostility

facilitated the mobilization of ethnic resources for economic action.

The strongest challenge to the assimilation theory came from Portes and his associates (Wilson and Portes, 1980; Wilson and Martin, 1982; Portes, 1984; Portes and Back, 1985). Wilson and Portes (1980:302) hypothesized and empirically confirmed that,

> Immigrant workers are not restricted to the secondary labor market; in particular, those inserted into an immigrant enclave can be empirically distinguished from workers in both the primary and secondary labor markets. Enclave workers will share with those in the primary Sector a significant economic return to past human capital investment. Such a return will be absent among those in the "open" secondary labor markets."

Overall, what Portes, et.al. suggest is that participants in the enclave economy earn higher human capital returns than the same ethnic groups in the general economy.

The first critical challenge to the ethnic enclave theory came from Sanders and Nee (1987). They have empirically disputed the 1980 conclusion of Wilson and Portes, and argued that the ethnic enclave economy benefited enclave employers but that it harmed enclave wage workers. In a rebuttal, Wilson and Jensen (1987) contend that Sanders and Nee (1987) misunderstood the theoretical definition of the enclave and write, "unfortunately, the manner in which enclave is defined in this analysis has little to do with the definition of the concept." Thus, Portes and Jensen (1987) accused Sanders and Nee (1987) of defining enclave as "ethnic residential areas" (p.769) to which Sanders and Nee (1987) responded that they did not restrict their analysis to any particular residential location but to residence in Miami and Hialeah, Dade county, place of work, and place of residence in the Miami SMSA. This definition, according to the authors, was important in distinguishing the differential impacts resulting from whether an enclave worker lives and works in the same area, whether he/she works in the enclave and lives outside, or lives outside and works in the enclave.

A lengthy debate ensued from this first encounter which led Portes and Jensen

(1989) to reexamine the enclave theory. Using two independent data sets (the 1980 census individual sample for Cuban born adult immigrants in south Florida, and a 1986 longitudinal survey of Mariel entrants in the same area), they challenged the proposition that ethnic enterprise is a vehicle for exploitation and enclaves are mere residential areas. In concert with the confrontation between Portes and Jensen and Sanders and Nee, others have also joined the debate. For example, a whole issue of Sociological Perspective (Volume 30, no 12, 1987) was devoted to the enclave theory. In that volume, Bonacich (1987), taking the impetus from Marxist theories of conflict and exploitation, discusses ethnic economy as one based on conflict and exploitation between capitalist corporations, ethnic entrepreneurs, and ethnic wage workers. She suggests that ethnic entrepreneurs are oppressed and exploited by the capitalist corporations who in turn oppress and exploit ethnic wage workers. This conclusion is similar to that of Sanders and Nee (1987) in that it is the ethnic wage workers who are perceived as victims of the exploitation process. On the other hand, Portes (1987b) reasserts his earlier conclusions that employment in the ethnic sector is more preferable for minorities than in the general market. In reaction to the arguments about whether the enclave is a meaningful avenue for immigrant mobility or not, Cobbas (1987:471) writes:

> There are healthy as well as economically precarious ethnic enterprises, it does not seem to be accidental that Portes, a student of the successful Cuban ethnic economy of Miami, has a more sanguine view of the ethnic enterprise than do Bonacich and Zimmer and Aldrige who have studied groups that have not fared well.

The sociology of migration and race relations, as I have shown in the preceding discussion, has been dominated by the assimilationist perspective by invoking a "natural history cycle" (Fleras, 1990). Even those who questioned this predetermined natural cycle due to the apparent lack of assimilation by ethnic minorities either still maintained assimilation as a possible final outcome, withdrew from the question altogether, or left

the problem to social psychologists who concentrated more on analysis of attitudes (Lyman, 1984). Still others disappointed by the failure of the assimilationist perspective introduced the split labor market and ethnic economies, or ethnic enclaves (Bonacich, 1972; 1973; 1980; 1987; 1992; 1993, Wilson and Portes, 1980) as a way of understanding the process of incorporating of ethnic minorities in the American society. However, none of these researchers have incorporated Blumer's theory of race relations for the understanding of race relations in American society.[6] It is to this question that I return to now.

Blumer's Theory of Race Relations

Blumer's theory of race relations is guided by three theoretical assumptions. The first pertains to the assertion that the concept of race must be regarded as a set of definitions that exist within a particular social structure. This assertion necessarily shifts the analysis and the conceptualization race from the traditional biological and psychological reductionist positions to the social and sociological realms. What Blumer (1954:9) suggests here is that the understanding of race, and therefore "race relation must be sought in social conditions and historic experience and not in any analysis of race". This statement is far reaching in that it suggests that a complete understanding of the concept of race can not be achieved by analyzing race itself. In other words, in order to understand the meaning of race one has to understand the conditions and historic processes that give racial categories their meaning. The second pertains to the assertion that race and race relations are not a distinctive feature separate and wholly different

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[6] Lyman (1984:107) suggests two reasons for this: "(1) ignorance of his work; (2) misunderstanding of symbolic interaction in relation to the study of race and ethnic relations."

from other social relations (see also Lyman, 1984; Killian, 1970; Maines, 1988). Rather, as Killian, (1970:184) pointed out, Blumer:

> ...has never lost sight of the profound significance of the fact that race relations are essentially relations between groups, arising out of a collective process in which one racial group defines another racial group and, by opposition, defines itself."

This process of groups defining each other racially, according to Blumer, is not necessarily different from definitions based on other social categories. To this end, Blumer (1954:9) writes:

> Any careful scrutiny of the relations between groups compels a recognition of the following points: (1) such relations are the product of a complex number of factors; (2) they are markedly dependent on the peculiar character of happenings and situations; and (3) they are subject to much change, occasionally approaching pronounced transformation. This is true irrespective of what may be selected as relations."

In order to elaborate on this point, Blumer identifies seven categories of relations such as formal economic relations, formal status relations, preferential relations, ideological relations, attitudinal relations, orderly or discordant overt relations, and organized manipulative relations. More importantly, Blumer suggests that the nature of a given race relation is determined by the nature of other social relations that may exist in a society. This argument is very important in that Blumer hints the existence of confounding effects between race relation and other social relations such as economic relations. That is, in order to understand race relations, one must fully understand the effects of other relations on race relations.

The third assumption pertains to his assertion that race prejudice exists essentially in terms of group positions rather the feelings that individuals of one racial group have towards the members of another racial group. This assertion moves the idea of prejudice

from individual feelings to collective group feelings derived their position in the social hierarchy.

In summary, Blumer suggests that the analysis of race, and therefore race relations, must be lodged within the conditions and the historical frameworks within race as a phenomenon exists. This conclusion is very important for my dissertation, in that the process of race relations between Somali immigrants and the majority Canadian society is understood through the process of migration, which encompasses both the host and the home environment, as well as the migration chains and routes that individual immigrants go through in order to reach a desired final destination. These conditions include the nature and the kind of identity categories that individuals carry with them from their home environment. In what follows, I will try to examine what identity and identity challenges and transformations mean.

IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Identity and culture are the basic building blocks of ethnicity (Nagel, 1994). Traditionally, identity has been perceived as "primordial," acquiring its energy from "deep seated human impulses and needs that are not eradicated by modernization" (Alba, 1990). This proposition derives from the assumption that cultural elements and features associated with particular groups are immutable and resistant to all changes (Nagata, 1974).

However, recent sociological theories and research on ethnic identity have been construed as an either/or proposition. That is, identity formation and reconstruction have been largely conceived as either resulting from or constrained by structural contexts or as an emergent phenomena constructed by the social agents in interaction (Wolkomir, 1996). Much of the theorizing about the nature of identity in sociology can be traced back to Mead (1934). According to Mead, the self is a distinctly social construction guided by

the social environment within which social individuals interact with each other. Later, based on Blumer's (1969) treatment of symbolic interactionism, two schools of thought have emerged: the processual and the structural approaches to identity. The processual symbolic interactionists follow Blumer's notion that meaning, including identity, are the products of social interaction within specific situations though a process of negotiation. On the other hand, the structuralist utilizes Mead's reference to patterns of social relationship. That is, the structuralist places emphasis on the role of individuals in the formation of identity (Wolkomier, 1996). Still others argue that "the construction of identity and culture is the result of a dialectical process involving both internal and external opinions and processes, as well as the individual's self identification and 'outsiders' ethnic designation" (Nagel, 1994:154).

Maines (1978) suggests that people may have many identities that can fluctuate with the social location and context at hand. In addition, an individual may gain more identities than he/she had before. For example, the birth of a child to a couple assigns them the added identities of father and mother while simultaneously assigning their parents the added identities of grandfather and grandmother. Even in cases of death, where traditional demography deducts one individual from the population, the identity of that person may remain with his or her family. In the case of immigrants, for example, someone who was an engineer may become a dishwasher, a refugee, and an alien simultaneously. However, the construction of identity may not be only situational, since it is in part shaped by appearances, language, and gender (Stone, 1962). This means that the creation and the designation of ethnic identity may be optional some cases while it may be ascribed in other cases. Mary Waters (1990) studied how third and fourth generation European Americans posses the option of either claming and/or not claiming an ethnic identity. But, the most important implication of her study for my dissertation is the concept of what she calls "costless communities". That is, whether one claims an ethnic identity or not, the result is the same in that it does not carry any consequences for

the individual. This is similar to what Gans calls symbolic identity. The main question, though, and the one that this dissertation will address, is whether similar options are available for the non-white immigrants. Mary Waters again suggests that the experiences of the non-white immigrants are not similar to those of the white groups. Non-white immigrants and refugees are racialized and thus their options are affected by their color. They are also different in that their assigned or chosen identity has some real or perceived social and economic consequences.

These social consequences may include what Goffman has referred to as stigma. Since Goffman's (1963) classical work, research on stigma and social identities has generated some important insights into the complex relationship between self and social identities. The legacies of Goffman's work can thus be found in studies of the homeless (Snow and Anderson, 1991); immigrants (Field, 1994); working class students in elite universities (Gardner, 1991), and people with mental and other physical disabilities (Blum, 1991, Herman, 1987).

However, most of these research endeavors have concentrated on what Goffman referred to as stigma management and thus on such concepts as passing, deviance disavowal, disclaimers and covering, to understand how supposedly stigmatized groups and individuals manage every day conflicts between their virtual and actual identities, and how they engage in the construction of self and social identifies that provide somewhat respectable, dignified, and more positive personal identities. For example, in their study among the homeless, Snow and Anderson (1987) investigated the extent to which homeless individuals manage their identity problems given their spoiled identities. They conclude that the homeless individuals engage in distancing, embarrassment, and/or fictive story telling in order to control information given off. More recently, Field (1994), again using Goffman's analytical framework, studied the attempts that first generation Irish immigrants, as he puts it, the attempt "to meet the confrontation between social and self definitions initiated by confrontations with a problematic social identities" (p.431).

He concludes that first generation Irish immigrants manage their devalued social identities by engaging in strategies of personal identity construction that range from exclusivity and pragmatic identification to autonomy.

Another similar research program that took its impetus from Cooley's (1902) looking glass self and Bogardus' (1925) social distance analysis tried to understand the extent to which majority group members reject and/or accept other non similar groups. The most notable research in Canada along this line was conducted by Berry (1977). Berry's analysis suggests that that the evaluation and acceptance of minority group members by the majority results in what he referred to as the "hierarchy of acceptance". In other words, minority group members who originated from European countries were put at the top level of the hierarchy, while those of Asian and African descent were put at the bottom of the hierarchy.

More recently, several scholars have tried to understand the extent to which minority group members perceive themselves, believe they are perceived, and are actually perceived by the majority in terms of Quebecois, foreigner, and immigrant. (Mogadaham and Taylor, 1987; Mogadaham, et.al., 1994). For example, Mogadaham and Taylor (1987) conducted a study of visible minority women in Montreal and found that these women perceived themselves more as Canadians and less as immigrants than they believed majority group members perceived them. Again, in 1994, Mogadaham and his associates carried out a study which explored how members of various minority groups perceive themselves, are perceived, and are actually perceived by the majority in Montreal in terms of Qubecois, foreign, and immigrant. In other words, they tried to assess the accuracy of believes that minority group members held about how they are perceived by the majority. Their findings are consistent with that Berry, et.al (1974) almost twenty years earlier and suggested that majority group members differentiate between minority groups and more accepting towards those of the European origin than those from Africa and Asia.

Summary

This chapter has presented a selective review of symbolic interactionism, by focusing on the most of relevant thoughts pertaining to this study. Blumer's views were discussed as representing the general thrust of the symbolic interactionist perspective. The ideas of Ervin Goffman, Gregory Stone, Anselm Strauss, David Maines, and Sheldon Stryker were discussed in terms of the process of identity maintenance and transformations. This was followed with a survey of the theoretical and empirical literature pertaining to migration and identity. Here I discussed assimilation and ethnic resilience models of migration. I have also discussed the literature pertaining to the distinction between refugees and immigrants. In the next chapter, I address issues of method. Given the nature of the research problem of this dissertation, I employ qualitative methods, particularly, in-depth interview and participant observation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The Research Problem

In this study, I explore migration and identity processes among Somali immigrants in Toronto through qualitative analysis, using in-depth interviews. The main issues to be addressed are 1) in what respects migration is a social process, and 2) in what respects identity and race are socially defined categories that exist within a particular social structure. The purpose of the chapter is to describe the methodological approaches that have been employed in addressing these questions. In the first part of the chapter, I specify the main questions addressed. Next, I discuss my experience in the field both in terms of access and the nature of the sociological interview. This will be followed by a discussion of the process of sampling. In the second part, I discuss the details of the interview schedule, interview techniques, data management, sample characteristics, and the coding process and analysis. Finally, I will discuss the theoretical perspectives that guide the process of data collection and analysis.

Research Questions

Throughout the course of this study, I explored several questions concerning migration and identity processes among Somali immigrants in Toronto. These questions are:

> In what respects is the Somali migration to Toronto is a social process as opposed to mere physical relocation?

This question is tied to the main argument of my study, which asserts that migration is a social process. The data pertaining to this question are divided into three analytical

stages. The first stage is the pre-migration stage. The second is the migration process itself, while the third is the post-migration. Taken together, the three stages are intended to capture the overall experiences of those who relocate. This question leads to my second question, which is:

> What variations exist within the Somali community in terms of the immigrant-refugee distinction?

This question was derived from the migration literature and is intended to tap into the controversy that underlies the distinction between refugees and immigrants. The purpose of raising this question is to move beyond the mere refugee-immigrant distinction by providing a detailed road map of why and how people migrate, rather than the usual typologies that are based on whether or nor a country is experiencing a political upheaval.

The third question is:

> In what respects are the identification processes of Somalis different from those found in Canada?

This question is particularly important in that it provides the basic background upon which the discussion of social structural differences between Somalia and Canada is established. The purpose of raising this question is to discuss the nature and the kinds of identification systems that are used by the Somali society. It establishes the idea that racialized and ethnicized identity categories do not provide meaningful categories of social understanding for Somalis. Rather, social identifications in Somalia are based on clan affiliation.

This discussion leads to my fourth question, which is:

> How do individuals that migrate from societies that do not employ racialized identity categories deal with identity categories imposed by a racialized social structure?

This question is intended to provide the basis for the argument that identities, as well as

race are social definitions that exist within particular social structures which is in turn conditioned by certain social agents.

The final question raised in this study is:

> What are the interactional and group affiliative processes of Somali life in Toronto?

This question will address the interactional patterns of the Somali community in Toronto in terms how they relate to each other and to the Canadian society at large. The question is intended to provide some discussion about whether or not the Somali community has created a cultural enclave.

In what follows, I will discuss my experiences in the field. The discussion of my field experiences at this stage is very important in that it structured the process of sampling. By structured, I mean, the initial obstacles that I faced in getting access to the field forced me to somewhat restructure my initial sampling process. As such, I have decided to provide a detailed discussion of my experiences so as to provide a context for the process of sampling used in this study.

Field Site: Entering the Field

Getting in and/or gaining access to people one wishes to observe and talk to is a particularly crucial aspect of participation observation and field research (Hoffman, 1980; Shaffer, 1980; West, 1980; Maines, Shaffer, and Turowitz, 1980). The idea of access as a methodological issue has been conceptualized by some under what Simmel (1950) referred to as the social role of the stranger (Horowitz, 1986; Maines, Shaffer, and Turowitz, 1980) or, as a variation as professional strangers, (Agar, 1980); and/or self reliant loners (Lofland, 1974). In this regard, the fieldwork researcher is seen as having qualities that are somewhat different from those he or she is studying. According to Van Mannen (1988:2), "To do field work apparently requires some of the instincts of an exile,

for the field worker typically arrives at a place of study without much of an introduction and knowing few people."

Despite these generalizations about problems of access in fieldwork, there is strong evidence that social and individual characteristics play an important role in determining access. According to West (1980:31) "access problems are exaggerated when certain of the researchers ascribed characteristics are markedly different from those of the subjects". Others point out that ascribed characteristics can become a burden and a blessing to issues of access and rapport in a fieldwork situation. Gurney (1985), discussing her fieldwork experience in a male dominated setting, shows how her being a young female researcher facilitated her access to the field because she was seen as non-threatening. She further argues that the same ascribed characteristics, which worked in her advantage, became liabilities when her focus shifted to establishing and maintaining rapport with her male respondents.

Other categories that affect the level of access and rapport in fieldwork are social class (Hoffman, 1980), similar experiences between the researcher and researched (Maines, 1973, 1980), and age differences (West, 1980). However, the same individual might experience different levels of access depending on opportunities that may arise during the process of fieldwork itself. Hoffman (1980) discusses how her initial problems of not being able to access the executive world of board directors was relieved by chance when one of her interviewees discovered that he knew a member of her family which made the rest of the fieldwork accessible.[7] This discussion can then be seen as indicating that the process of entry and access to field situation is not a generalizable unitary process that is experienced by, to use Gurney's word "Anyman." Rather, it is a set of experiences that are very much situated. Thus, it is apparent that the process of entry

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[7] Hoffman refers to this opportunity as access and social identity. In other words, the discovery of her social identity by one of her interviewees positioned her as one of the group.

into the field, as I have pointed out earlier, is not a uniform process, but rather a multivariate situation determined by the individual's social characteristics and the nature of the field itself. In what follows, I will provide a brief description of my own experiences of the field.

Fieldwork Experiences

My fieldwork experience in Toronto was interesting in that my researcher identity became inseparable from my community membership identity. I am, for all practical purposes, part of the community that I was studying. In situations like that, one would assume that I would not have had any problems of access and rapport within the community and among my respondents without seeking any help from community leaders. However, as it turned out, I had my own share of problems to the point where I had to abandon my initial sampling process due to the fact that I could not generate enough respondents on my own.

My interest in the Somali refugee community in Toronto began with the arrival of my three brothers in Toronto, Canada. They were among the first large group to seek refugee status in Canada just before the civil war in 1989. During this time, I attended community social gatherings with friends several times a year between 1988 to 1993. In these few years, I observed the community grow from a few hundred scattered individuals to thousands with its best singers, medical doctors and other professionals as a result of the civil war in Somalia in 1991.[8] Later, when I started my fieldwork in November 1996, I thought I had considerable knowledge about the nature and social structure of the Somali community in Toronto.[9] But this assumption was challenged

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[8] These singers include Hassan Adan Samatar, arguably, the best and the most popular Somali singer alive.

[9] My initial assumption of my knowledge about the Somali society emanated from the fact that I am myself a Somali and an immigrant a well. In other words, it can safely be assumed that I have somewhat similar experiences about the subjects that I was trying to understand.

within the first few days of my fieldwork. Specifically, I was sitting with an old friend of mine discussing my research plans at one of the usual Somali coffee shops in Toronto, when a thirteen or fourteen year old boy came to our table and asked my friend for a cigarette. I told my friend not to give him because he looked very young and my friend responded correspondingly. The boy then left us in sort of angry mood and sat at a nearby table. A few moments later, we felt we were a little harsh on him and thought we should call him and explain the reason for denying him the cigarette. So I called him over and tried to explain why we thought we should not him give him the cigarettes. Then he suddenly looked at me and said " I am safe brother, I am safe". I could not comprehend what he meant by "safe" right away. A friend later explained to me that some of these children are "gang types" and that his response might have meant " cool down brother, I don't have a gun, or I am not going to hurt you".

But beyond the actual meaning of the phrase, the important thing, at least methodologically, was the sudden realization that the Somali community is not the one I though I understood. More importantly, I had assumed that since I was a Somali and immigrant myself, access to the community and finding individuals would not pose a problem. With this assumption in mind, I decided not to seek the help of community leaders in finding individuals to interview. Thus, in line with these assumptions, I decided to just hang around the tailor shop of a friend who told me I could contact people there. In other words, I had decided that since I was a member of the community myself, I could refrain from going through the formal channels of access and cooperation from community leaders and other noted individuals.[10]

Soon, however, I faced many difficulties in finding individuals to interview on my own and was forced to abandon that strategy. After few days of pondering, I realized that

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[10] West (1980) has used a similar strategy in his study among adolescent deviants successfully on the justification that since these adolescent were somewhat deviants, cooperation and permission from groups like parents, schools, or politicians might not help.

being a member of the community, an insider if you will, did not necessarily mean an automatic access to individuals in the community. This became the case despite the overwhelming assumption that access to research subjects is mainly an outsider problem. Clearly, as the present experience indicates, ascriptive and individual similarities between the researcher and researched are not a complete "boarding pass" to respondents from the community.[11] Access is also affected by the suspicion between refugees and immigrant communities on the one hand and that of their host societies on the other. If individual respondents are suspicious about social agencies from the dominant groups of the host society then the individual character of the researcher is less relevant.

Another important issue is the level of conflict among sub-groups within the community. In such situations, the researcher/community member is implicitly located within the conflicting matrix of the community. For example, one morning while I was sitting in the shop of a friend, a young gentleman walked in and started conversing with my friend/informant. I had seen this gentleman a few times in the shop already, and in the middle of the discussion, my friend suggested casually that I interview the gentleman. I soon became interested, and started explaining my research agenda to him. He hesitated for a moment and said he needed to take time to consider my request. After two or three days, I again saw him at the shop and I asked if we could make an appointment for an interview. He hesitated for a moment and said, " I don't trust anyone. In fact, I don't trust any Somali. There is nothing that Somalis can trust in each other". I understood what he was referring to, given the current political climate of the Somali people. In another incident my friend/informant telephoned a women that he knew who used to come to his shop in order to ask if she were willing to give an interview to a friend who was trying to study the Somali people in Toronto. I could hear their conversation, as I was near the

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[11] For some discussions about the ways in which ascriptive categories (especially gender) can throw barriers and block access to the acquisition of field data and interviewees,(see, Reinharz, 1992)

phone. I could also deduce the nature of their discussion from his responses. But beyond that, my friend told me as he hung up the phone that " she did not want to give an interview, because she did not want to be implicated in anything". At one point, he said that she said " she wanted to talk to someone that she trusted to see if she will allow the interview or not", but he added that it was " Just an excuse to get out of it".

Generally the idea of a formal interview was very problematic for studying the Somalis. Most of the times I could collect even intimate information, if I did not pose as a researcher by initiating casual conversations about any issue that I wanted without any one becoming suspicious of my identity as a researcher. In other words, if I decided to use a covert technique, I could have had access to all the details that I may have so desired. However, whenever I mentioned that I was doing research on the Somali community, the nature of the conversation suddenly changed.

For example, in the early days of my fieldwork, I went to a coffee shop, and as I was trying to find a seat, a Somali gentleman seated at the corner asked me to join him. After introducing ourselves, we started talking about the Somali civil war. He said, "Somalis are crazy. I have read many civil war situations in the world, but never in the same intensity that Somalis destroyed their country. You know, people can disagree-but why do they have to destroy the country itself, dismantle factories and sell them for scrap in neighboring countries. You know, Somalis do not have the slightest idea about nationalism. What do they have in this country (Canada)? Our culture has been thrown into a deep well--lost. Children do not respect their parents, women do not respect their husbands. I have never seen a child saying "don't talk to me-like that" to his parents, we have that in Canada". All this happened within the first twenty minutes of our conversation. While he was still talking, I decided to tell him about my project, because I thought he might be a good source of information. Once I told him about my project and even before I was able to request an interview from him, however, he started to advise me about the proper things to write about the Somali people. He said I should write about the

good things of the community, about how the Somali people are very clean people and not involved in criminal activities like selling drugs and about our beautiful culture, about how before the civil war, Somalia was a great country, and the problems that we have with the Canadian immigration. After an endless conversation of that sort, I thanked him for everything that he told me, but that I had some specific questions. I gave him my interview schedule so he could see the kind of questions I was planning to ask him. When he read the first five questions, he told me to change the questions because they were too personal and might produce a bad image of the Somali people. At that moment, I could not understand what he was talking about. I tried to explain what the questions were intended to achieve and that I had no particular interest in creating a bad image for the Somali community. Nevertheless, he refused to give me an interview.

Problems of access and rapport do not stop even if one is referred to a respondent as the following experience indicates. Such situations can even become more problematic in certain situations, because some respondents may not turn you down altogether because of the fact that you are referred to them by someone that they trust, and are thus unwilling to disappoint them. However, they may try to provide you quick responses or create other situations of doubt about the research itself. In one situation, one respondent referred me to a young lady whom he knew very well. The next day I called the lady and made arrangements to go to her house. There were several children in the living room watching television. After several minutes I asked her if we could start, hoping that she will find a little privacy, but said "O.K." still siting. As I started asking her the questions she started to respond with one-word answers. Another situation involved a discussion about the legitimacy of my research. That is, whether I was the actual person who was doing the research or whether I was working for some other research group from some University. After explaining that this was my own research, the discussion again shifted to a conversation about the Behavioral Investigation Committee. While reading the Informed Consent, she said, "why is this called a Behavioral Investigation Committee, I

thought you were doing a research on the Somali immigrants in Toronto, "well yes I do" I said. "Well if that is the case then, why is this Dr. Lichtenberg's phone number is written in here if you are the one doing the research?" she asked. Then I tried to explain the process and the assumptions behind the human subjects committee. At any rate, I was finally able to sort through the problems and interestingly enough collected one of the most interesting interviews among all my respondents. All of this suggests that the process of entry and access to the field is an individualized process that requires constant negotiation even if a trusted friend referred the respondents.

After these and other similar encounters, I decided to refocus my sampling process and decided to speak with community leaders. One or two days later, I saw one community leader, who after explaining my research interest, invited me to go to a meeting between Somali community leaders and a Canadian parliament member (MP) that was to be held the following week. Once in the meeting, he introduced me to several individuals whom later introduced me to other individuals that resulted in the current sample. Another important experience relates to defining the parameters of the sample in terms of who is to be considered as Somali for the purpose of the study, something that I now return to.

Defining Somali Immigrants in Toronto

In my initial dissertation proposal, I defined or categorized the Somali people into four different groups residing in four different countries: Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti. My initial purpose was to locate those from the Somali Republic. However, once in the field I realized that those distinctions were not very important for most of the Somalis that I met. For example, in several situations I interviewed some respondents who were referred to me as Somalis, but learned later they were from Kenya. But when I asked them who they considered themselves to be, they said they were Somalis and that all their social networks were mainly tied to the Somali community. Therefore, I decided

to define Somali as anybody who considered themselves as Somali. Thus for the purpose of this dissertation, then, Somali is defined as anybody who considers themselves Somali despite whether they were born in the Somali republic or in another African country. However, it must be noted that in the sample those who were not born in Somalia mainly came from Kenya. Others who are either born in Ethiopia or Djibouti reside in Canada but are not represented in this sample.

The Sociological Interview

Still another important issue in fieldwork is how the interview encounter is conceptualized. The image of the social science casts the interview as the "digging tool" (Benny and Hughes, 1970, Manning, 1967) of the sociological enterprise; as a "search-and-discovery mission (Holstein and Gubrium (1995); as a transactional process (Manning, 1967); or a conversation with a purpose (Back, 1962). Benny and Hughes further point out that sociology itself is the science of the interview. What this means is that the interview process is one of the most important aspects of social research since it is the main source of data collection. However, the process of gathering interview data is not uniformly agreed upon. Generally, interviews in the social sciences can be distinguished by their level of standardization (Maccoby, 1958; Denzin, 1970; Benny and Hughes, 1970). More recently, several scholars, especially within the symbolic interactionist framework, have recognized the interactional basis of social science interviews (Blumer, 1956, 1969; Benny and Hughes, 1970; Denzin, 1970; Maines, 1973). But what transcends all interviews is the assumption of that Manning has referred to as the "information game". According to Manning:

> "The "ideal interviewer" is the one who attempts, according to the usual goals of the interview, to maximize the importance of the information game, encouraging the respondent to believe that maximum pay-offs can be obtained by giving complete information". (1967:309)

More recently, though, Holstein and Gubrium (1995) criticize all social science

interviews for conceiving the respondents as "passive vessels" of answers. In the vessel of answers approach, the responses of the respondent are epistemologically conceived as a collection of possible answers that are merely passively given in response to questions. In other words, he or she is not part of, or engaged in the co-production of knowledge, but instead, are regarded as repositories of facts and related details of experience. Therefore, the only trick for the interviewer is to find ways in which these experiential details can be tapped in their pure form. As an alternative, Holstein and Gubrium propose what they call the "active interview:"

> The subject is neither repository of opinions and reason, nor essentially a wellspring of emotions. He or she is not predefined but instead constructed in relations to the ongoing communication contingencies of the interview process. (1995:14)

They suggest that the interview is a process that links both interviewer and interviewee in collaborative process of meaning-making. That is, meaning-making is not external to the interview process. Rather, meaning is inherent in the act of interviewing itself and is constructed in-situ as a product of the talk between interview and participants. This way of seeing the interview engages both the why's and what's of the interview and thus the research process as a whole.

For the purpose of this dissertation, then, the interview is seen as the digging tool of sociology; but also as an interactive encounter (Maines, 1973, Denzin, 1970). However, while I also think of the interview along the lines of the active interview, I disagree with Holstein and Gubruim in that I prefer to think of the interview in all of these forms because I believe neither conception of the interview process can entirely capture all the variations in an interview. For example, in one section of the interview process, the researcher's intention may be to collect sociodemographic information and in another section, he or she may let the respondent talk for some time without much interruption. On the other hand, if the participants engage in a sequence of probing and responses, then the interview can be seen as both interactive and active simultaneously

insofar the interviewer tries to learn something with the collaboration of the respondent and participants are engaged in a process of co-production of knowledge.

The ideas of the interview as the digging tool and as interactive have received considerable attention over the past few decades. However, the interview conceived as the site of knowledge production is of recent nature and it is that to which I would like to provide some examples from my own fieldwork. The interview as a site of collective knowledge production can be understood only if we assume that both the interviewer and the respondents bring narrative resources to the interview site. These narratives can be related to the cultural images and social roles that are taken by the interviewer and the respondents in each particular cultural and role situation. These narrative resources change depending on the role the respondent takes in responding to any particular question (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). At other times, respondents may bring narrative resources that are lodged in a different culture than the one under which the interview is taking place thereby rendering the whole process unintelligible. The following is an example in which the respondent was confronted with a question that she could not locate within her own narrative resources. The question deals with the respondent's ideas about race and ethnicity in her homeland prior to her arrival to Canada.

> I: O.K., What did you consider yourself ethnically when you were in Kenya?
> R: Ethnically, umm, umm, I, I don't know how to answer that question. I really don't know what you mean by consider myself ethnically. To me being born somewhere and living in a country more than twenty years that is how much it takes to feel comfortable.

Apparently the respondent did not understand what I meant by ethnicity. In other words, ethnicity was not part of her narrative resources and thus could not be activated. The respondent nevertheless answered the question in terms of comfortability and the discussion continued along those lines. However, I did not conceive the existence of narrative resource problem until I raised the next question, which ended up in process of a collaborative knowledge production:

I: How about issues of race?
R: back home?
I: Yeah.
R: Long hesitation.
I: Remember, in Canada, we think in terms of black
and white.
R: Right, right, here yes, but there no, no. I never, never, never heard of the word before I came here in this country, never, race? I have never heard of the word before, actually before I came here. That is the time I heard about it.

It is apparent that initially the respondent did not conceive the concept race in her stock of knowledge, but with my help, she was able to activate an initially dormant narrative from her stock of knowledge. On the other hand, when the narrative resources or the stock of knowledge are readily shared by both the interviewer and respondent, the process of the collaborative meaning-making becomes smoother. This meaning-making exchange relates to gender role problems among Somalis in Toronto, as the following interaction between the respondent and myself indicates:

I: I also hear that Somali men are saying that this country is {interruption}...
R: You mean spoiling the ladies.
I: Yeah. {laugh, laugh}.

The interview continued, but what I would like to point is that as opposed to the earlier exchange where both the interviewer and the respondent did not share a readily available narrative resource in relation to the issues under discussion, in this case, the process of the knowledge co-production went smoothly. The interruption in this case points out that the respondent understood the direction of the question and alternative narrative contexts were not necessary. In other words, without myself finishing the question the respondent anticipated my intention thus showing a shared narrative resource base.

Moreover, the particular role that an individual takes in relation to a particular question as opposed to another one shifts the process of the active interview. This same respondent, after talking about gender problems among the Somali society, suddenly shifted into a counselor role. I also learned at that same moment that she was actually a counselor for battered women. This piece is also extracted from the same above question

and reads as the following:

> R: It is really hard, it is true, but in some ways, it is not true, this is not a women's country, it is a matter of understanding and counseling, Somalis, they don't know what is counseling, yeah. If you tell them go and see a marriage counselor, they will ask you do you think I am crazy, they will think that, that is it. I have intervened in so many cases like that everyday. This place that I am working, I try to bring them together just understand, talk, talk is the major thing. You say what you feel and let her say what she feels, put everything on the table period, and things are going to work out.

Prior to this point, the respondent was talking about gender problems among Somalis in terms of her own understanding as an individual immigrant, but as can be seen from the above excerpt, she suddenly became a marriage counselor. The preceding discussion suggests that interviewees are not passive respondents. Rather, they engage in the process of knowledge co-production along with the interviewer.

Sampling Techniques

The sampling procedure used in this dissertation is snowball sampling or "Chain Referral"(Babbie, 1992). The Chain referral technique is based on the assumption that the researcher has been identified by a trusted member of the potential respondent. This technique was necessitated by the fact that the Somali community in Toronto is a very recent group and thus there is no sampling frame in which to select a random sample.[12] Another difficulty is that individuals in the community are not comfortable with researchers asking them questions, particularly when the questions involve issues relating to their immigration status. The only alternative to such difficulties was to create a

[12] At the conclusion of my fieldwork in the spring of 1997, the 1995 Canadian Census was not yet published. The census prior to that was in 1990 at which time there was no significant Somali population in Toronto.

situation whereby the sample of respondents was generated by the respondents themselves (Shaffer, 1980, Lopata, 1980; Hoffman, 1980). Moreover, I initially used a few community leaders in order to generate the first few cases. The use of community leaders in the sampling process was necessitated by the fact that I could not generate willing respondents on my own without the assistance of community leaders.[13] However, the number of referrals from any individual was limited to a maximum of two in order to make sure that respondents did not come from the same social networks. In some situations, even among those that resulted from the initial referral of a particular respondent did not necessarily know each other. Furthermore, I used several referral chains each resulting in a number of respondents which made the whole process a heterogeneous one (Lopata, 1980). Despite the success of this strategy of gaining respondents, there existed a continuos bargain between myself and each new respondents in what seemed an ongoing process of negotiation through the entire duration of the research (Shaffer, 1980, see also Geer, 1964). What this suggests is that one has to still negotiate even if the respondent was referred to by another respondent that he or she trusts.

The major limitation of snowball sampling is the general lack of representativeness (Babbie, 1992) since it is very difficult to assume that those included in the study are representative of all Somalis in Canada. However, given the fact that the purpose of this study is not to provide a statistical representativeness, the issue of statistical generalization becomes moot. The only generalizations that are made from this study are to those of similar situations. That is, this study can be generalized to individuals that have similar characteristics and are constrained by similar conditions.

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[13] This experience also sheds some light about the fact that had I used survey sampling in gathering my data, I could have had compromised the reliability of data. This is so because refugees and recent immigrants are very suspicious about researchers asking questions, especially questions pertaining to immigration and immigrant status.

The Interview Process

Thirty in-depth life history interviews were collected. The respondents consist of both men and women, married and unmarried, and are between the ages of 20-49. Respondents were interviewed at their home or at an agreed upon location that was convenient for the respondent. The primary interview schedule comprised thirty-nine open-ended questions. Following the open-ended questions, a face sheet containing several structured socio-demographic and substantive questions were given to the respondents. The main purpose of the structured questions in the face-sheet was to provide a triangulation for the data. For example, some questions were asked in both the interview schedule and the face-sheet so as to increase the richness of the data as well as the reliability. The design of the interview guide was developed on the basis of current literature on migration and ethnicity, as well as my knowledge of the Somali community in Canada.

Observations

Aside from interviewing, I was constantly a participant observer throughout the entire period of my fieldwork. Quite a bit of these observations were carried out by frequenting the gathering places of the Somalis in Toronto. These places included the many Somali owned restaurants and pool shops, or *Billiardi*, as the Somalis call them. I have also participated in wedding ceremonies and other community functions. The main intention of these observations was to gather information about the social interaction patterns of the Somali community in Toronto.

The Somalis, especially men, use these gathering places as a source of information sharing about the current political situation in Somalia and their everyday life in Toronto. The particular gathering place that a given individual frequents at may depend on several factors such as proximity, clan affiliation, or the duration of residence in Canada. Despite the nature of affiliation, though, these coffee shops remain where the most intense information sharing takes place. At any particular moment, each table in the coffee shop

has between two to five individuals, again either by clan or some other affiliation. The kind of discussion carried in each table depends on the nature of the group affiliation. If the group is primarily composed of individuals from the same clan, then the discussion may be about issues related to that particular clan in a way that is impossible when members from other clans are present. However, among those who congregate on basis other than clan affiliation, the discussion is almost always non clan-based. Even at times these individuals tend to criticize the society as being too dangerously clanistic. In general, though, these gathering places serve as a major source of information sharing. The information shared may be related to job search, immigration problems, and so forth.

The interaction patterns of women is somewhat different. This is mainly due to the fact that the Somali society is highly gender segregated and that the culture does not allow women to publicly associate merely for sociability purposes. Thus, women get together and share information through wedding ceremonies, which are frequent in Toronto. Other women, mainly the more religious ones, organize Islamic teachings once or twice a week. These observations were very important in providing triangulation and contextual information for the interview data, especially as it relates to social interactions processes among the Somalis in Toronto.

Data Management

Like any organizational strategy, the purpose of organizing and managing data is to reduce a seemingly large and heterogeneous mass of information into a more conceptually intelligible form. Given this, I have employed several procedures of data management. First, I have transcribed all the interviews and stored them verbatim into computer files with identification numbers from 001 to 030. The names of the individual respondents along with identification numbers were stored in a separate file. The verbatim transcripts average between 14-45 double spaced pages. The initial organization of the data consisted of a detailed reading of each interview and making comments and

notes on the margins. This process resulted in the identification of a large number of categories.

The Process of Coding

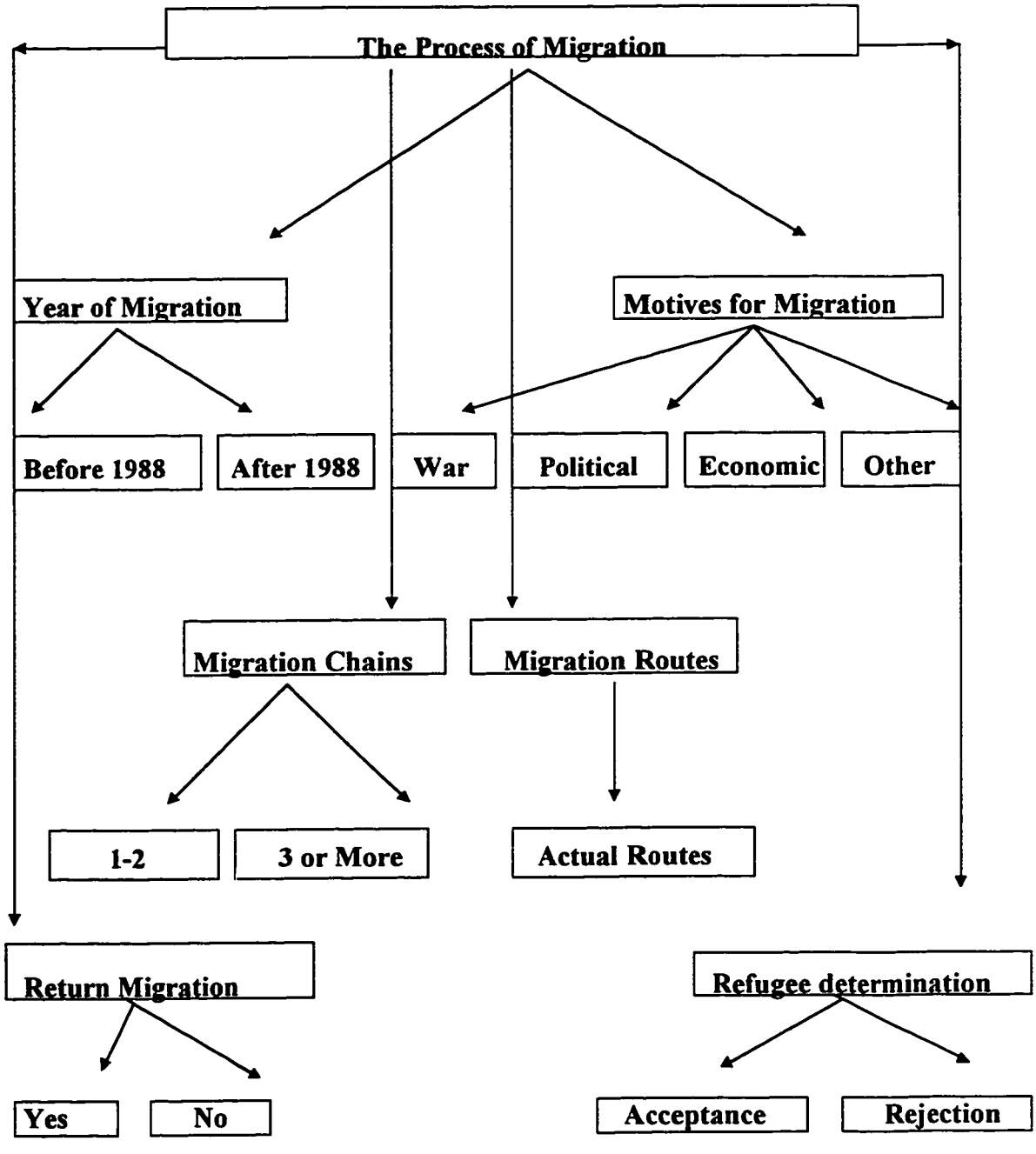
While collecting and analyzing the data, several theoretical categories emerged. Once a particular category emerged from a certain text, it was searched throughout all the interviews to check whether the category repeated itself enough times to warrant the inclusion of that category in the analysis. This process resulted in more than eighteen categories. These categories fell into two master categories referred to here as the migration and identity processes. In the case of the migration process, the following categories emerged: year of first migration, motives for migration, migration routes, migration chains, migration networks, return migration, and the process of refugee determination. In the identity processes master category, the following categories emerged: pre-migration awareness of racialized identity, post-migration awareness of racialized identity, identity devaluation, counter devaluation, and identity salience. These two master categories emerged as I have progressed in the process of analyzing the data.

It became clear that the process of migration served as a master category or a major construct under which I could theoretically locate all other categories as aspects of that master category. In other words, half way through the analysis process, it became clear that why and how people move from one location to another was somehow determined by a number of structural and personal factors.

The actual coding process in terms of how individual respondents varied in their responses within a particular category as shown in Figure 1 (page, 57) is carried as the following: Based on my field work among the Somali community in Toronto, I discovered that the process of migration among the Somali refugees and immigrants entails several aspects. The first aspect, according to the data, is the year of migration. This category varied among those who migrated before the onset of the Somali civil war

in 1988 and before that period and as such year of migration is coded as either leaving Somalia before 1988 or after. The second concept is motives for migration. Again, based on my field work, the majority of the respondents discussed their experiences either in terms of ideologically based political motives, motives based on the civil war, or other motives such as education and health.

Figure 1



Thus, the category of motives is coded as political motives, economic motives, or other motives (health, education, and marriage). These two categories are derived from the interview data which resulted from the question "when was the first time you left Somalia and why"? The third category derived from the data is migration networks. Again, the majority of the respondents indicated they had social networks that facilitated their migration to Canada or did not have such a network. Thus, given this variation, the category of migration networks is coded as yes or no, indicating the presence or the absence of networks to facilitate their navigation. The fourth category is migration chains and routes. As I have mentioned earlier, migration chains refer to the number of countries that one goes through, while routes refer to the actual countries that one went through in order to reach a final destination. Thus, migration chains is coded as either 1-2 countries or 3 and more, while routes are charted in terms of the actual countries. The fifth category is intention to return to Somalia and is coded as either yes or no.

As mentioned earlier, the migration process serves here as a master category under which the above sub-categories can be conceptually located. For example, motives of migration is a sub-category of the process of migration. This sub-category was derived from the question " why did you leave Somalia?" The motives of migration as shown in the figure has also several sub-categories. These sub-categories were derived from variations in interview responses. For example, those who were literally pushed by the civil war and did not plan to leave the country prior to that were grouped under the sub-category "civil war". Those who left the country just prior to the civil war and who sensed that the country was facing political unrest were grouped under the category "political", and those who left because of economic reasons were grouped under the category "economic". The sub-categories under the migration process are also conceptually divided into those that relate to the reasons of migration and those that relate to the motives of migration. The motives of migration refers to factors that led to the migration of the respondent from Somalia to Canada. The process of migration refers to the actual movement. For example,

the sub-category motives of migration relates to the motives of migration, while migration routes relate to the process of migration.

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 presents the social and demographic characteristics of the respondents. The average age of the respondents range from 19 to 49 and are equally divided into male and females. Almost all the respondents, except those who did not respond, were born in an urban city. The educational level of the respondent's range from less than high school to masters degree. What is clear from the education level of the respondents, though, is that even if we count the no responses as less than high school, more than 83% of the respondents graduated from high school before migrating to Canada. Forty three percent of the respondents graduated from college before migrating to Canada, while almost 7% of the respondents had a master's degree before leaving Somalia. However, when we look at the income level of the respondents, almost 57% of the respondents make less than 10,000 Canadian dollars per year and only one person (3%) of the respondents make 70,000 and over. 43% of the respondents are married, while 40% of the respondents are single.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Category	Frequency	Percent
PLACE OF BIRTH		
Urban	26	86.7
Rural	--	--
No Response	4	13.3
EDUCATIONAL LEVEL		
Less than High School	1	3.3
High School	7	23.3
Some College	3	10.0
College Degree	13	43.3
Masters	2	6.7
No Response	4	13.3
GENDER OF RESPONDENT		
Male	15	50
Female	15	50
INCOME OF RESPONDENT		
0-9,999	17	56.7
10,000-19,999	2	6.7
20,000-39,000	3	10.0
40,000-59,999	3	10.0
70,000 and Over	1	3.3
No Response	4	13.3
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	13	43.3
Single	12	40.0
No Response	5	16.7
OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL		
Skilled	1	3.3
Professional	8	26.7
Unemployed	5	16.7
Student	10	33.3
No response	6	20

The Methodological Perspective

The basic methodology within which these questions are addressed is mainly derived from grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Grounded theory itself is based on assumptions from pragmatism (Mead, 1934), and later from symbolic interactionism (Park and Burgess, 1921; Thomas and

Znaniecki, 1919; Blumer, 1969). According to Corbin and Strauss, grounded theory has two important principles:

> Since phenomenon are not conceived as static, but as continuously changing in response to evolving conditions, an important component of the method is to built change, through process, into the method. The second principle pertains to a clear stand on the issue of "determinism". Strict determinism is rejected, as is nondeterminsm. Actors are seen as having, though not always utilizing, the means of controlling their destinies by their responses to conditions. (p.5)

Grounded theory also makes several assumptions about data collection procedures, the relationship between data and theory, and the process of sampling. First, grounded theory assumes that data collection and analysis are an integrated process. That is, the process of analyzing data starts as soon as the first datum is collected. Second, concepts rather than variables are seen as the basic unit of analysis. In other words, incidents, events, and happenings are seen as the main target of data collection rather than isolated elements of the actual individuals involved. Third, these incidents, events, and happenings must be related to some concepts and those concepts to more general abstract categories. Other assumptions deal with the importance of constant comparison. That is, comparison must be constantly used as each new item is added to those that were previously collected. The types of data suitable for grounded theory are not confined to any particular data. The general guideline is that any data that are suitable for the understanding of human conduct is best understood from the perspective of the people involved. These types of data include interviews, focus group interviews, life history interviews, narratives, archival records, autobiography, and so forth (Maines, 1992; Denzin, 1989; Corbin and Strauss, 1990).

The main data collection procedure used in this study is the life history interview supplemented with participant observation. The life history approach in sociology started in the early 1900's and was associated with the Chicago school (Maines, 1992). The early

proponents of the life history include sociologists as W.I. Thomas, Robert Park, and Clifford Shaw. This trajectory was maintained later by Howard Becker, Anselm Strauss, and Michel McCall. According to Denzin (1992:220), "The life history presents the experiences and definitions held by one person, or one organization as this person, group, or organization interprets those experiences." The main assumption behind the methodological usefulness of the life history approach is that human behavior must be understood from the perspective of the individuals that are involved in the conduct. According to Maines (1992:1135) "The main assumptions of this approach are that the actions of individuals and groups are simultaneously emergent and structured and that individual and group perspectives must be included in the data used for analysis."

There are several types of life history approaches that can be used depending on the purpose and the interest of the researcher. Denzin (1989) describes three types of life histories: the complete life history, the topical life history, and the selective life history. The complete life history is intended to capture the entire sweep of the person's life experiences. The topical is similar to the complete life history, but it is only intended to capture one phase of the life experience. The selective life history is a procedure that allows the researcher to interject interpretation, comments, and explanations into the voice of the narrator.

This dissertation follows the topical life history in that it captures three phases of the respondent's experiences in a way that is not a complete sweep of the their life. The first phase is referred to as the pre-migration phase, the second is the migration or the exit phase, while the third is called the post-migration and the resettlement phase. In the pre-migration phase, information the cultural values and identity attributes prior to immigration were collected. The second phase attempts to cover the everyday experiences and encounters during the migration process itself. The third and the final phase attempts to capture resettlement experiences including the struggles individuals encounter in their everyday attempts to secure employment, housing, and educational

training. It also examines the adjustment, if any, individuals make to their cultural and ethnic identities and the options that are open for them.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss both the research methods through which this study was carried. I begun by discussing the main questions that guide the study. Second I provided a detailed discussion about my experience in the field, followed by the process of sampling. Third, I discussed the interview schedule, the process of data management, the coding process, the sample characteristics, and the process of analysis. The final section of the chapter provided a discussion of the methodological perspective within which the research process of this study was conceptualized.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS I: PRE-MIGRATION CONTEXT

The analysis of Somali refugee or immigrant experiences must be tied to an understanding of their historical, socioeconomic, and sociocultural identities, and how these factors contribute to the process of displacement and resettlement. What follows is a brief review of the Somali historical background and cultural identities prior to migration. This will be done through an examination of existing anthropological and historical research. My discussion will address 1) the physical setting, 2) ethnic identity, Islam, and sociopolitical organization, and 3) the historical and political events that have led to the civil war and the subsequent Somali exodus to North America. The over all discussion of the issues is guided by what I heretofore refer to the contradiction/contestation between national narrative cultures and the actual empirical cultures. It is the contradiction between these two levels of realities, I will argue, that have served as the main cause of the violence in Somalia. This contradiction, as we will see, applies to all aspects of the society except the general geographic location and the physical characteristics.

Conceptualizing The Civil War

The Somali civil war has produced one of the most horrible human tragedies in the history of contemporary Africa. What is more lamentable, though, is the apparent incapability of Somali scholarship in comprehending the context within which it is constituted leading to what Mukhtar and Kusow (1993) have referred to as "the single

cause analysis".[14] This single cause analysis is not adequate because it is not so much scientific as political and mythical. However, this apparent lack of comprehension and concentration on the Siyaad Barre regime is not due to a lack of imagination from the part of scholars, as much as it is from the conditions imposed by some generalized narrative cultures about the nature of the society. These narratives are many, but the most important ones pertain to the Somali homogeneity and the lineage-based segmentary nature of the society. The first narrative claims that the Somali society is one of the most homogeneous communities in the African continent, if not the world. The second claims that both the social and political structures of the society are fundamentally tied to segmentary lineage structures and thus are egalitarian in nature.

Taking these narratives as givens, and thus beyond scholarly criticism, Somali scholarship has deprived itself of the most important theoretical hints that may unveil the problems that currently handicap serious scholarship. This is because, first, these narratives can not explain why this so called most homogeneous society has descended into such a civil strife, and second why the civil war took an almost spatial twist to it. That is, why the civil war has been concentrated on the inter-riverine region of southern Somalia. In fact, understanding the spatial concentration of the violence in Somalia may provide some powerful theoretical and analytical frameworks upon which it can be comprehended. The spatial concentration of the violence in Somalia may also unveil the ideological-mythical narratives that paved the way for the war to simultaneously commence and take a spatial nature. Thus, unlike popular scholarship in Somalia, which portrays the society as homogeneous, fundamentally segmented and thus egalitarian, I will argue that the Somali society is not homogeneous and that the segmentary lineage is

[14] The single cause analysis refers to the Siyaad Barre regime analysis, which dominated most explanations relating to the Somali civil war.

replete with social differentiation born out of symbolically constructed hierarchy.[15] This symbolic hierarchy, as it were, remained only at the symbolic level and fail to contribute to any real social stratification. The failure of the symbolic hierarchy to assume legitimacy is due to a contradiction between the narrative culture and the empirical culture that then produced a legitimation crisis. This legitimation crisis resulted from what I refer to as hegemony without domination. The idea of hegemony without domination is intended to capture a social reality that can differentiate between a truly hegemonic social reality and a formative hegemonic reality.

However, handicapped by the assumptions of the narrative culture, explanations of the Somali civil war almost exclusively concentrated on either external factors or problems of the regime. Thus, the most popular explanation of the violence in Somalia proceeded along the lines of problems of governance (Ahmed Samater, 1994), poor quality of leadership (Mirreh, 1994), lack of sustainable development (Wisner, 1994), super power conflict (Rawson, 1994), and Segmentary lineage problems (Lewis, 1994). Others point out the destruction of the traditional Somali culture by Siyaad Barre as the main cause of the violence (Afrax, 1994).

Lewis (1994) considers segmentary nationalism as the main cause of the violence in Somalia. By that, Lewis means that Siyaad Barre, despite his claim to the creation of an ideologically, rather than tribally based society, nonetheless, relied on tribal loyalty. Another argument relating to how the Siyaad Barre regime destroyed the traditional Somali culture, which in turn led to the current violence, is provided by Afrax (1994). Afrax provides a developmentally oriented linear progression of the development of the Somali culture and society. Within this framework, he provides three stages within which the cultural demise of the Somali society can be subsumed. The first stage is the pre-colonial stage in which Somali culture provided a strong belief in an unwritten law,

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[15] For complete understanding of the process of symbolic and narratively based hierarchies/differentiation (see, Dumont, 1970; Hammoudi, 1980; Kelly, 1993; Fuller, 1987).

reason, and a great sense of respect for social institutions. The second stage is what he refers to the great awakening era between 1940-1960. During this era, the Somali culture experienced a great renaissance which transformed the "people's consciousness from kin loyalty to a higher form of awareness based on "Somaalinimo"[16] (p.239-241). The third stage is "Arrested development". This era headed by Siyaad Barre is the one that destroyed the cultural and spiritual values of the society leading to the present crisis. Of course, Somali culture and all cultures for that matter have passed through different periods and manifested different contents depending on the social realities of the time, something Afrax does not even account for. But to pinpoint its collapse to a single period and a single actor seems a little bit farfetched. This is not to say that this causal mechanism is impossible, but that it is simply inadequate. What Afrax misunderstands is that culture must be seen as the result of the "products that actors draw on by way of grappling in emergent meaningful ways with situational problem". (Becker, and McCall, 1990:23). What this indicates is that the present cultural crisis in Somali must be located within a generalized social interaction between a large number of actors including the people and those in the regime trying to grapple with each other in dialectical form. The concept of dialects provides a framework in which both leaders and their actions can be seen as the products of social interaction situated by competition and cooperation at the same time.

What is even more problematic, though, is the kind of empirical evidence that Afrax uses to support his argument. He uses several Somali proverbs or portions of some Somali songs to show that the Somali culture contained some strong elements that emphasize the importance attached to problem solution through peaceful means as opposed to violence. One of these proverbs according to Afrax is *"Rag waxaad "Wallal" uga waydid Waran ugama heshid* (what can not be done by persuasion can not be done by the spear)". What Afrax ignores, though, is the other proverbs that indicate otherwise.

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[16] *Somaalinimo* can be roughly translated as *Somaliness*

For example, there is also a Somali proverb that says *Nimey shantaada ka celinin shan wadaad kama celiso* meaning if you can not defend yourself with your own hands, five Sheikhs can not defend you. The reason why I am providing this proverb is not to say that Afrax's argument is not justifiable, but that he engages in selective process of empirically supporting his line of argument. This process of selectivity is what lies at the heart of Somali scholarship, which as I have mentioned earlier, is based on the root assumption that the Somali society is homogeneous and egalitarian in nature. What this assumption had done is to create a blind spot for Somali scholarship from scrutinizing the culture and the social structure of the society. In other words, the homogeneity assumption leaves all theoretical outlets closed except along the single cause analysis. The rest of this chapter will concentrate on somewhat sociologically problematizing the social structure and the culture of the society. The general guiding premise is that beyond topography and the general geographic location of the country and to some extent Islam; everything about Somalia has been misconstrued. This is in fact what according to Ahmed "prompted the former American Secretary of State Herman Cohen to say, "perhaps we did not really know that much about Somalia (1995: 137).

The Physical Location

The Somali people inhabit an area of approximately 1,036,000 square kilometers in the Horn of Africa, running from 2 degrees latitude south and to 12 degrees latitude north. It is bounded on the east by the Indian Ocean, on the west and southwest by Ethiopia and Kenya, and on the north by the Read Sea. Of this area, between 10 to 13 percent of the land is classified as arable and even a smaller part of that is irrigable.

Topographically, the country can be divided into four geographic zones. These are the coastal plains; the northeastern mountains system, and the fertile inter-riverine area of the southwest. The only rivers in Somalia are the Shabelle and Jubba, which both originate from the Ethiopian highlands and provide the main sources of irrigation water.

The Shabelle River is not permanent and dries up yearly from January to March, while the Jubba is more permanent with an irrigation potential of about 150,00 hectares of land as compared to about 50,00 by the Shabelle.[17] The only source of water beyond the rivers is rainfall. However, rainfall is highly variable depending on the year and the location. It can range from 30mm annually in the northeast to about 700mm in Jilib and Baidoa in the inter-reverine region.

[17] See Ali, Ahmed Qasim. "Land Rush in Southern Somalia." Paper presented to the First International Congress of the Intrriverine Studies Association, held In Toronto, 1994.

Figure 2: Map of Somalia

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Islam and Society

The arrival of Islam in the eastern coast of Africa is of considerable antiquity. However, the dates of its penetration into the interior land and the mass conversion into Islam is clearly unknown.[18] Nevertheless, virtually all Somalis today are professed Sunni Muslims. In practice, Islam in Somalia is characterized by Saint veneration and belief in the mystical powers of charismatic holy men and allegiance to Sufi brotherhoods. There are generally three Islamic orders (Tariqas), or brotherhoods to which most Somalis declare allegiance. The first order is Qadiriya which traces its spiritual foundation to the Baghdadi Saint Sheikh Abdulqadir Jilani (d.1166). The second is the Ahmadiya, which traces it origin to the great Moroccan religious mystic Ahmad b. Idris al-Fasi (1760-1837). The third, and the last order, is Salihiya, which also goes back to Ahmad b. Irdris al-Fasi, but was popularized by his Sudanese student Mohamed Saleh. These different orders sometimes through mystical differences compete for membership, which at times creates conflicts, especially between the Qadiriya and the Salihiya (Laitin and Samatar, 1987). Thus, despite the fact that Islam cris-crosses other social differentiation and serve as a unifying force for a joint Somalihood, in other situations it "actually mitigates against it totally transforming Somali society" (Cassanelli, 1982:24) into a single homogeneous entity. This is because Islam's penetration through these three main orders and other countless saints, as Cassanelli pointed out, "had the effect of localizing religious authority and practice"(p.25). Thus, despite the fact that all Somalis adhere to the five pillars of Islamic faith, it is supplemented by localized and sometimes tribally correlated pilgrimages to indigenous Saints such as Abdirahman Zayli'i, Sheikh Aways in Biyooley, Sheikh Ali Maye in Merka, and Sheikh Hussen Baliyale in the southwest.

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[18] Laitin and Samatar (1985) suggest the fifteenth century, Cassanelle also suggests the later part of the nineteenth century. However, Trimington, locates the arrival of Islam in the northern coast of Somalia at around (A.D. 1154).

Population, Demography and Society

This is the point where consensus ends. For example, the population of the Somali Republic at independence in 1960 was estimated at three million individuals (Lewis, 1960, Cassanelli, 1982). The current population of the Somali republic is unofficially estimated at between 8-10 million. I use the phrase unofficial estimation because there has been no official census in Somalia since independence. There was one instance where the military regime of 1969-1990 initiated an official census, but the results were not published. Despite these generalized figures, the idea of census-taking has been a taboo in Somalia, to say the least. This is because the general census narrative is full of claims that some particular clans are larger numerically than the rest. This claim has been used to appropriate parliamentary seats unjustly. In fact, the importance attached to a particular clan being more numerous than its neighboring clan has traditionally been recognized (Lewis, 1961). Behind this national census narrative, though, is a more realistic census that a large number of the society is starting to realize since the civil war. This new realization holds that the southern regions are more populous than those in the north. For example, the Italian government's annual report to the United Nation's Trusteeship council in 1957 provided some interesting demographic figures which were never given any credence by the successive Somali regimes. This census was based on the six regions of the Italian territories before independence and the unification with northern Somalia. According to these figures, upper Jubba had far higher population than Mijurtinia and Mudug together, 362,234 and 223,773 respectively. The Benadir had 387,600 and Lower Jubba had 113,449. However, the narratively understood census was that Mijutinia and Mudug had far higher population numbers than the rest of the society. This is exactly the assumption that Lewis and other scholars used in claiming that the clans from northern regions are the largest clan.

Language and Society

The other misconception relates to the Somali language. Generally, the Somali language is part of what is known as the East Cushitic, a branch of the Cushitic subfamily of the African languages. Along with Somalis, the Eastern Cushic family group includes the Oromo of Ethiopia, Rendille, spoken by some pastoralists scattered around the eastern part of Lake Turkana in Kenya, and Boni, spoken by some remnants of hunters and gatherers throughout southern Somalia and Eastern Kenya. According to the literature, the Somali language is divided into two main dialects known as Maha, used in the central and northern parts of Somalia, and Mai, used in the south. This linguistic distinction also overlaps with sociopolitical divisions. Traditionally, the Maha dialect was the lingua franca in the area north of the Shabelle River, while the Mai was the main language south of the Shabelle River. Whether these languages are dialects or two different languages is subject to debate. The prevailing assumption is that these are two dialects that form a single language, which are mutually intelligible. However, a growing number of scholars suggest the two dialects are not intelligible to each other (Cassanelli, 1982; Mukhtar and Kusow, 1993, Kusow, 1992, 1994). Lewis (1961) who conceptualizes the speeches as dialects at the same compares them with Portuguese and Spanish. He writes:

> The widest dialect differences are between the speech of the northern pastoralist and the Digil and Rahanwayn cultivators. These differ to much the same extent as Portuguese and Spanish. Yet since many of its speakers are familiar with standard Somali, the extent of this distinctive southern dialect does not alter the fact that from the Jibuti republic to Garisa on the Tana river in Kenya, standard Somali provides the a single channel of communication and common medium of in which poems and songs compete for popularity.

The paradox within this statement, though, is that Lewis tries to recognize the existence of linguistic difference, but simultaneously dismisses the importance of that difference by introducing a riddle into an already existing riddle. In other words, Lewis dismisses these linguistic differences with the concept that every one in the society can communicate within the standard Somali. However, this is only true for the small,

educated Mai speakers mainly in the urban areas. I will come to these and other issues later on, but suffice to say, this is one of the strategies that Lewis and other scholars have used in the past to *explain away* methodological roadblocks.

The Somali People: Homogeneity versus Heterogeneity

There is at least some linguistic evidence that the Somali people have been in the Horn of Africa over the last two millennia (Ehret, 1995; Nuuh, 1985; Cassanelli, 1982; Kusow, 1995). However, their early ethnohistorical structure remains obscure. The first appearance of the name Somali in a written historical record was found in the victory claim song of Negash Yeshag (1441-1429) of Ethiopia over the neighboring Islamic Sultanate of Adal. Prior to that, however, the early Arab geographer al-Idrisi (1100-1166) mentioned a group known as Hawiyya living near a river, probably the Shabelle River. Furthermore, Ibn Said (1214-87) visited Merka and mentioned it as being the capital of Hawiyya. Others still suggest that the Somalis were known in classical times as the Berbers, maybe a derivation from Berbera, the name of an old port city in northeastern Somalia. The Egyptians are also said to have known Somalia as "Puntland," a reference to the Frankincense that was exported from Somalia to all parts of the Middle East. Still others have focused on the meaning of the name Somali itself. Lewis (1955), taking the impetus from Somali oral tradition, suggests that it is a combination of *so* (go) and *mal* (milk) which indicates a reference to their nomadic socioeconomic structure. Also quoting from Kamus[19], Burton (1894) suggests that it was the nickname given to a tribal chief who "thrust out his brother's eye".

However, neither the establishment of the first time the name Somali came into existence nor the determination of the origin of the meaning of the name has any substantive import for the Somali ethnicity and sociopolitical structure. The name might have existed prior to written records, or it can be a social construction. That is, the

[19] Qamus is an Arabic word meaning Dictionary.

formation and labeling of an ethnic identity can come about in many different ways other than that represented in the literature. Identity formation and the labeling of ethnic groups may represent the cultural realities of a society, a negotiated concept, an imposition from an external group, or still a combination of all these interactions. For example, in the Middle East where a large number of Somalis have migrated in the last 20 years are referred to as *Warya.* The word Warya is a male gender, the female being *naya*, used by Somalis to refer to each other in case they don't recall each other's names. Thus, when one Somali intends to get the attention of another unknown Somali male, he refers to him as *warya.* A similar case is found among the Sudanese in the Middle East, who refer to each other and are referred to by others as Zool. The result of this, however, is that both the Somalis and the Sudanese in the Middle East have incorporated the *Warya* and the *Zool* as part of their identity configuration. Thus, the reference of the name Somali to the Somali people by *Negash Yeshak* can be seen as resulting from a similar interactional situation. The point is there is nothing inherent or primordial about the name Somali or any other ethnic name for that matter. Ethnic names are as much a social construction as are ethnic identities.

As such, a growing number of scholars of the horn of Africa, particularly of Somalia, now agree that the origin and the history of the settlement of the region must remain largely hypothetical due to the overwhelming paucity of reliable sources. However, there is an implicit assumption that the Somali people have originated from outside the African continent, probably the region north of the Red Sea, later expanding southward since the start of the 10th century. In order to support this contention, some social anthropologists, particularly Cerulli and I.M. Lewis, "have postulated a well-organized and rather elaborate north-south migration routes and trends based on an otherwise highly mythical but ideologically enduring Somali oral tradition" (Kusow, 1995:84). More recently, Herbert Lewis (1966), Turton (1975), Hersi (1976), Cassanelli (1982), Nuuh (1985), Ahmed (1995), and Kusow (1995) have one way or another

suggested that the origin of the Somali people must be located within the horn of Africa.

The most recent argument concerning Somali origins has been provided by Kusow (1995:81) by examining the inconsistencies of prior written works and sociolinguistic analysis, supplemented with an ecosystem approach towards migration. I conclude:

> This appraisal does not in any way claim to be definitive, yet tentatively suggest that the Proto-Rewen Somali occupied almost all of southern Somalia prior to any Cushitic or Bantu-speaking groups until recently, when the population of the region increased dramatically, creating a great shortage of land and resources. This population pressure forced more and more people to migrate to the more arid regions with more extensive use of Camel as the sole mode of subsistence. It was probably at this time that the Hawiye Somali diverged from the Proto-Reewin, later splitting itself into Dir, Darood, and Isaaq. These three groups later expanded northward until the 16th century, when they started a reverse migration to the south mainly for economic reasons. Both the Reewin language and socioeconomic structure of the of the Proto-Reewin confirm their being the historical, linguistic, and sociocultural link between the early Cushitic speakers and the modern day northern Somali language.[20]

However, even if one can accurately assess the origin of the Somali ethnic identity and the meaning of its ethnic name, it still does not say anything about the current identity and social structure of the people. The sociopolitical structure of the Somali society has been accentuated by modernization, and urbanization supplemented by a different type of clanism. I know return to those issues.

The Sociopolitical Structure

The present political structure of the Somali society is divided into six major groupings conveniently known as clans. These are vast confederations of kinship

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[20] Osman Mohamed, a Somali Archaeologist with extensive field work in southern Somalia brought to my attention that the Bantu groups also appeared around the same time in Somalia. If this true, then this conclusion will be modified to include the Bantu groups in the reconstruction of the Somali History. To that end, Osman and I have discussed to incorporate some archeological data to make this statement further conclusive.

groupings that claim descent from a mythical ancestor. Descent among individuals within the clans is traced through the male line. Furthermore, the ancestors of virtually all Somali kinship groups are said to have ultimately descended from Arab immigrants who have married local Somali women. Based on this mythical ancestor, Somalis are said to be the most homogeneous group in the African continent. The political structure of the Somali society is assumed to be based on what is anthropologically known as segmentary lineage systems. Cassanelli (1982:10) defines segmentary lineage as "... a society made up of several structurally similar groups capable of combining and dividing at various levels according to the circumstance." These circumstances can be political or economic. It means that small groups affiliate with larger groups for protective purposes, while larger groups affiliate with smaller groups for purposes of creating strong coalitions. This has resulted in the formation of well-organized clan differentiation.

Thus, social order in Somalia, whether it is related to political organization, social differentiation, or economic distribution is mediated by clan differences buttressed by segmentation. Kinship or lineage segmentation, according (Samatar, 1988:12) "is a social institution with a double edged sword serving both as a tool of divisiveness and fragmentation as well as buttressing a move in the other direction. Moreover, the Somali society is seen as predominantly nomadic both in terms of its mode of production and its cultural values by the national narratives.

However, the idea of national cultures has been recently problematized. In his classical essay, "Imagined Communities", Benedict Anderson (1983) argues that besides borders, nationalism and the nation states are imagined communities in that their realization is based on varieties of collective practices and representation. However, despite Benedict Anderson's forceful argument that somewhat revolutionized our understandings of culture, both scholars and politicians insisted on conceptualizing Somali culture and its nationalism as representing a primordial aspect of the society. This process of premordializing the Somali culture has produced several powerful taken- for-

granted cultural markers under which everything Somali has been construed. The first such cultural marker is the idea of homogeneity. The general statement regarding the homogeneity of the Somali people asserts that the Somali people are one of the few highly homogeneous society in Africa in that the people speak the same language, adhere to the same religion, are overwhelmingly nomadic or pastoral, and with few minor exceptions are of the same ethnic group who claim descent from the same ancestor (Lewis, 1955, 1961, 1995, Laitin and Samatar, 1987; and Samatar, 1996). For example, while trying to understand the Somali conflict, Ahmed Samatar raises the question of " How is that one of the very few homogeneous societies in Africa cam become so alienated from itself?" This is a question that I will come back to later, but I only assert here, that Samatar totally missed the point. In this same work, though, Samatar mindful of the recent arguments regarding the heterogeneity of the Somali society provides the following footnote while insisting on the homogeneity:

> Homogeneity in this context does not mean that everyone is exactly the same on all accounts. rather I acknowledge that there are areas of Somali society that diverge from the main stream in the forms in which certain social practices and rituals are administered. Moreover, even in the category of Somali language, it is important to note that some of the Somali people of the riverine area (Jubba and Shabelle) speak Mai-a regional and distinctive dialect-where those of the urban centers of Mogadishu, Merka, and Bravo speak a dialect called Banadiri. In view of this, critics of the homogeneity thesis, such as professor Mohamed H. Mukhtar have a point, and analysts ought to be mindful of regional and subcultural variations. In the final analysis, however, I insist that Somali homogeneity, construed in the Wittgensteinian sense of "family resemblance," is more than defensible, far beyond these differences in dialect and ritual administration. Somalis hold on to a common ancestral origin, a broad traditions and obligations (heer) and the principal of Islam (1995:17, footnote).

Before I commit myself to the substantive aspects of the argument of this statement, let me make few comments. First I selected this statement not because it is the only statement in Somali scholarship that insists on the assumption that the Somali

society is highly homogeneous, but it is one of the first statements that shows the impact of the homogeneity critics (Mukhtar, 1995, Kusow, 1992, 1994, 1995, Ahmed, 1994, 1995, 1996). Second my point about this particular text is not necessarily one of postmodern or post structural sensibilities of textual deconstruction, but rather is informed by an old fashioned Blumerian articulation of the relationship between conceptualization and empirical instances.

To go back to the substantive issues of the statement, I will first focus on the language concept. As I have mentioned earlier, Lewis (1961) compares the two dialects to that of the difference between Portuguese and Spanish. The question then is whether Portuguese and Spanish are two different languages or dialects. In the absence of linguistic scholarship in Somalia regarding this issue, the most fruitful discussion is the dimension of intelligibly between the two dialects. For example three years ago, after finishing my talk regarding the heterogeneity of the Somali people, one Somali fellow approached me and said the following: I was a medical doctor in the Bay region, but when I was first sent there, I was under the impression that all Somalis spoke the same language. However, when I started working there I could not understand a word they said. It was as if though I was thrown into a different language and culture. The only thing I learned was *Uurka Ku Dhuuriye* meaning I have a stomachache. Finally I had to employ a translator.

A second interesting incident regarding the intelligibility of the two dialects occurred in Canada in 1992, when one of the leading Somali scholars, after finishing his talk was suddenly asked a question in the Mai dialect. The embarrassed professor turned to another scholar sitting by him who spoke both dialects for help. This scholar refused until a translator was called to translate the question for him and then responded. Finally, another personal experience occurred a little over twenty years ago in 1974 during the now famous Somali National Literacy Campaign in which most primary and secondary school students were sent along with their teachers to the rural areas to teach the then-

created Somali alphabet. Myself, along with one another student, were stationed in a small farming village some ten miles southwest of Biadoa. Instead of teaching the alphabet, we ended up teaching them the Maha version of the Somali. How do you teach an alphabet to someone who doesn't know the language itself? It was like teaching the German alphabet to an English-speaking group. In such situations, one ends up teaching both the alphabet and the language simultaneously. Even more interesting was when we tried to make them learn the national song (Guulwade Siyadd). The joke among students at the time was the difficulty of teaching them the song. Even those who finally learned it did memorize it only without understanding what it meant.

These narratives do not provide the sort of empirical data required sometimes to support theoretical statements regarding the existence of two languages in Somali, but they nevertheless make the point, for now, that the two dialects are not mutually intelligible. The lack of intelligibility is very important, if nothing else, for the appropriation of all social policies. If a majority of the people does not understand the national dialect then how could participate in the political structures of the society. Moreover, the institution of a national dialect can create inequalities within the work force. For example, while every Somali who could speak the national dialect after completing the alphabet could apply to jobs, those who speak the Mai dialect did not have the same opportunities.

Despite these realities, though, Ahamed Samater still insists on defending the homogeneity concept with what he refers to as homogeneity construed in the Wittgensteinian sense of family resemblance. It is very difficult to understand Samatar what means by defensibility for he does not elaborate on it. But, to the extent that it means validity, and that in turn validity is assumed to refer to the extent to which concepts measure exactly what they are supposed to measure, then he fails to do that. The only answer that I can provide is that it is similar to Lewis's argument some thirty years ago that despite the fact that these two dialects are not mutually intelligible, its impact is

undermined by the fact that everyone in the nation can communicate in the national language.

What actually makes the homogeneity argument even less defensible is demography and the spatial concentration of the two dialects. In other words, the people speaking the two dialects are spatially segregated. The Mai is spoken in the area south of the Shabelle River, while that of the Maha is spoken north of the Shabelle River with some areas south of the Jubba River. Considering Cassanelli's statement that the Somali clans prior to the colonial period were settled in clan-based distinct areas without much contact, and that thus the history of Somalia must seen from a regional perspective, it is thus arguable that the Mai and Maha speaking groups did not have much interaction before the colonial period. The homogeneity concept is not defensible on the basis of race and caste either. Unlike what most Somali scholars would like us to believe, there are racial and caste categories within the Somali society. There is a considerable number of groups in the society who are considered to fall outside the so called lineage system and who are subjected to caste situations (Midgaan) and racialized situations (Jareer) which means kinky hair. Beyond that, there the Hamari or the Baravanesse groups who are considered as also outside the lineage system and are treated unfavorably. Thus Samatar's statement is not defensible culturally, racially, or caste wise.

The second taken-for-granted cultural marker is the segmentary lineage aspect of the society (Lewis, 1955; 1961, Laitin and Samatar, 1987, Ahmed Samatar, 1988; 1996). The segmentary lineage model was first introduced by W Robertson Smith (1903), and later taken up by Evans-Prittchart (1940) and Fortes (1949, 1953).[21] However, it was Marshal Sahlins (1961) who provided the most elaborate theoretical articulation of the concept. According Sahlins, segmentary lineage systems entail a permanent lack of leadership, unilinear relationships based on complimentary opposition between lineages

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[21] For a good survey of the intellectual history of segmentary lineage structures (see, Abu-Lughod, 1989).

of equal depth, and a structure of violence on genealogical grounds. The classical statement representing such structures is said to be " I against my brothers, my brothers and I against my [patrilineal] cousins, my [patrilineal] and my brothers and I against the world". This classical statement initially observed in the Middle East was translated to the Somali context as I and my clan against the world, I and my brother against the clan, I against my brother. Thus segmentary lineage systems are seen to consist of egalitarianism between different lineage groups of equal depth achieved through constant opposition in a sort of ordered anarchy.

In general, thus, the idea of segmentation has provided a very elastic and flexible concept applicable to every social behavior be it conflict or cooperation. Lewis's (1961) *pastoral democracy* is an apt example of segmentation seen as providing an egalitarian system for the Somali political structure. However, the same author in 1996 claimed that that same segmentation is what initiated the civil strife in Somalia. Beyond that, though, what has been utterly neglected is the potential of the segmentary lineage to create a system of symbolic differentiation through narratives that locate different clans in a sort of hierarchical locations. The main problem is that neither these narrative representations, nor the way lineage segmentation has been conceptualized can provide a clear understanding of the Somali society. These generalized assumptions are mainly narrative cultures whose categories do not mesh well with the every day empirical culture, and it is precisely because of that contradiction that the Somali society destroyed itself and scholars are grappling with its explanation yet to no avail.

The Causes of the Somali Civil War

In what follows, I will discuss the causes of the Somali civil war based on the incompatibilities between narrative and empirical cultures. By narrative culture, I mean the appropriation of symbols and values that are purely mythical and legendary, while by empirical culture I refer to the norms and values that everyday Somalis employ. Within

this general statement, I argue that a crisis, in the general Habbermas sense, between the narrative and empirical culture has occurred. The main reason behind the crisis is that the narrative culture, despite its attempt to install ideological hegemony supported by the state, lacked domination or the necessary power within which such hegemony could be implemented. Another reason for the crisis is that the idea of segmentation has been totally misconstrued in that both the state and Somali scholars have portrayed lineage segmentation as essentially egalitarian, while in reality it carried an explicit social hierarchy. In short, clan differentiation in Somalia takes the form of social stratification. These clan-based symbolic hierarchies produce similar stratification as that found in racial and ethnic societies. In other words, it determines who gets what, when, and where. This way of perceiving the Somali society allows one to see the civil strife in Somalia as resulting from a competition over scarce resources.

In fact recently, a growing number of scholars have started to conceptualize the Somali violence as a war resulting from an acute competition over resources pointing out to the spatial concentration of the violence (Besteman and Cassanelli, 1996; Mukhtar, 1996; Ali, 1994; Omar and DeWaal, 1993). This group unlike those who conceptualize the Somali civil war under the breakdown of cultural values or proper governance, point out that the Somali civil war is very much a war over resources. [22] Besteman and

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[22] It is very difficult, if not impossible, to explicate how, when, and where these ideas started to germinate. This is because the discussions about the causes of the Somali civil war has been carried out in oral presentations both of Somalis and Somalists in the frequent conferences and workshop between 1991-1995. Some of these presentations found their way into publications, while others are not still published, and still others were only oral presentations. The point is very simple. It is very difficult to figure out who said what in a world where only published work is given credence. But the point is also that those unpublished remarks of some in those conferences may have been incorporated in the publication of others. What is even more perplexing is how some of the more established scholars have selectively started to quote only those in their networks. What is safe to say here, though, is that by 1991, a small number of scholars both Somalis and Somalists have one way or another started to recognize the incapacity of the traditional scholarship in accounting for the Somali civil war, let alone, the nature of the society. To be sure some scholars have started to provide different views and readings about Somali history or the structure of the society by the early 1980's. Some of

Cassanelli (1996), for example, argue that the most aggravating effects of the civil war occurred on the communities around or in between the Jubba and Shabelle Rivers. These communities occupied the most productive areas of the country and were at the same time disadvantaged both politically and economically since independence. These statements no doubt provide the most powerful conceptual explanation of the current violence in Somalia so far. It will influence the thinking of those that I have already referred to as the single cause analysts. For example, Menkhause's empirically supported argument that under the guise of internationally supported development projects, powerful groups expropriated resources from the less powerful groups by delegitimizing their rights to the land and treating them as little more than working subjects provides a powerful historical basis for what happened to the so called Jareer people over the last twenty years. Menkhause further concludes that these same processes continued throughout the civil war when the war lords and their handyman diverted and looted relief aid intended for the starving Gosha people while at the same time conscripting them to forced labor.

This way of conceptualizing the Somali civil war is very instructive in furthering our understanding of the causes and the consequences of the Somali civil war, but it is very limited in that it is materially deterministic. It does not answer the question, what made it possible for the more powerful ones to expropriate land from the less powerful

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these scholars have shed some light on groups or other aspects of the society that were previously neglected, while others provided some conceptual frameworks that will no doubt reorient the ontological and epistemological basis within traditional Somali scholarship. By 1992, a general recognition that the traditional scholarship can not account for the empirical culture of the society took even a deeper and sharper focus. The question that bedeviled scholars at the time was "how such a homogeneous society could fall into such a total disorganization. This question has been raised by Ahamed Samatar (1994), Besteman and Cassanelli (1996). But a more succinct answer was provided by Kusow (192,1994:31) by rejecting the homogeneity and pointing to its incapacitating feature to which he writes, This portrayal of the Somali nation has painted a picture in which the slightest idea of a civil war was inconceivable". The homogeneity concept as a hegomonic strategy was further explicated by Mukhtar and Kusow (1993).

clans? In order to answer this question one has to introduce the cultural and ideological aspects of the society. This endeavor can tie the war over resources concept in explaining the violence to a higher level-that of the ideological narratives within which the act of misappropriating land from the less powerful can be explicated and can lead the discussion to a higher level of intelligibility. The assertion here is very simple, and suggests that while the idea of the war over resources is noble, its ultimate intelligibility must be tied to the national narratives, albeit unsuccessful, that delegitimized certain groups. It is thus, this legitimation process that paved the way for not only the ultimate confiscation of land and other resources from the less powerful, but for some of them, to being forced to work on their own lands in a semi slavery conditions.

Some aspects of the process of the cultural and political delegitimations have been pointed out by Mukhtar (1986). However, it was fully articulated by Ahemed as early as 1989 culminating in the Invention of Somalia (1995) and later his Day Break is Near... (1996). The chapters in the Invention of Somalia contributed by several scholars both noted and new, and the preface by Ahmed provide a noble theoretical grounds within which the delegitimation of the empirical culture of the society can be understood. And it is only the understanding of delegitimation of those empirical cultures, I belief, that the real nature of the society and therefore the current violence can be made comprehensible. This includes also the resource factor of the civil war. In fact, my chapter in the Invention of Somalia puts the resource factor at a higher theoretical level than merely using it to explain the civil war. I make the argument that conflict over resources has been a major component in the formation of the social structure and settlement patterns of the Somali society from its conception through conflict and cooperation.

Narratives and the Civil War

The current Somali civil war must be seen as a contradiction and, or a contestation between the everyday empirical culture of the larger number of the society and the state

supported narrative culture-a culture that more often than not remained only at the symbolic level. This last point is very important because the argument is not to suggest that a national narrative culture with a total domination existed, but that in fact, it is precisely because of this lack of hegemonic status of the national narrative culture over the empirical culture that has led to the current crisis. In other words, despite the state's efforts to impose and solidify its selective clan-based hegemonic narrative cultures, it fell short of establishing a true hegemony understood in Gramsci's terms. The reason for this is simply that the different clans maintained distinct geographical and settlement patterns until about the turn of the century when the Italian colony started to incorporate its administration throughout all the regions. What I intent to refer to is what Ali reading Kadare's *Waasuge iyo Warsame* suggests in that the different subcultures of the society "do not really know each other". Ali further writes,

> The absence of such knowledge about the other precludes any form of reconciliation of the subculture level". The nomad and the peasant each had contempt for the other" (1996: 25).

This lack of knowledge and consequent contestations can be seen from one well-known urban narrative. The narrative is between an encounter between a burglar nomad and an urban dweller of the Hamari ethnic group. The narrative states this one nomad burglar went to the house of a Hamari during the night in order to steal a cow. While untying the cow, the wife of the Hamari saw the burglar and reported it to her husband to which the husband replied, "it is O.K., don't worry, he will bring it to the market tomorrow and I will buy it from him." This narrative seems very simple, but their social implications go further. Among the instigators of the national narrative culture, this narrative is used to indicate the cowardliness of not only that individual, but also the entire Hamari ethnic group. In other words, it situates the reaction of the Hamari gentleman, and by extension his ethnic group, as cowards and thus morally weak in a culture where the perpetuation and the capability to wage war is given more credence.

This illustration can be further elaborated with another narrative that happened in one of the conferences among the different factions to the Somali conflict. The narrative relates to a comment that was made by the leaders of the Hamari ethnic group Abdulahi Rajis, a well-known politician and lawyer. The narrative goes while in the conference, he asked to be included in the sharing of power. The tale holds that one of the other more powerful parties said since he (Rajis) and his group took no arms they were not eligible to take any share. Rajis, the story continues, responded by saying if that is the main requirement, then he will go back to Mogadishu, Kill someone so that he can get some share. But for the Hamari gentleman's version, at any rate, is not cowardliness, but that for him the nomad burglar is unseasoned. Even at a higher level, the moral import of his reaction is that his life is too worthy to be lost in quarrel over a cow that costs no more than few hundred shillings.

These urbanized and contested narratives receive their wisdom from what has been a seemingly coherent generalized narrative, but contested by the empirical culture. This narrative, as I have shown earlier relates to the origin and thus homogeneity of the society. The narrative claims that the ancestor of the so-called six clan families descended from Arab immigrants. This origin probably resulted form an interaction between the 19th century European obsession with the origin of the races, and some Somali clans desiring to gain a favorable position within this internationalized ranking of the races. To be sure Somalis were also influenced by Islam and their desire to connect themselves to the family of the prophet. However, the way these interaction proceeded, the result has been an implicit Arabness in the background. As for the early European ethnologist, their assumptions about cultural diffusionism and Hamitism fit well with both the social and physical structures of the Somali. This is, in fact, what led Marjorei Perham, in Major Dane's Garden to write,

> They were striking couple: the women Khedichu, was the most beautiful women I have ever seen. She stood as straight as a spear and had regular features, a European profile" (quoted in Ahmed,

1994:14).

However, despite the generalized application of the tenants of the Arab origin narrative, underlie the further assumption that some groups more directly descended from the Arab ancestor than others. This is what generally, albeit unmentioned, differentiates the so-called children of *Jabarti Carbeed* from the rest with the underground allegation that the children of *Jabarti Carbeed* are somewhat superior than the rest.

At a higher level, these narratives divide the so-called six clans that constitute the lineage structure, into the nomads and the not so nomads. With an implicit assumption that the very nomadic groups are superior to the non-nomads. This is despite the fact that the idea of who is nomad and who is not a nomad is not clear. For example, despite the fact that the idea of nomadism is tied to an ownership of camels, a large number of the so-called nomads belong to either farmers or fishing communities. But the fishing part of the society has been eliminated from the cultural representation for the simple fact that it seemed a liability. In other situations, the so-called non-nomadic groups traditionally and currently own more camels than the very so-called nomadic ones.[23]

Beyond the so-called six clan families are those that, for one reason or another, fall outside the lineage system. These are either the so-called caste or the racialized groups. For the caste groups (Midgaan), the narratives suggest that their ancestor ate the meat of a dead animal. The narrative goes that the ancestors of both the noble and the caste groups were two brothers. Before setting out on a long journey, their father advised them that in case they became very hungry at any time during the journey, they should eat whatever they find even if it is the meat of a dead animal. However, the father warned that when they reach their final destination, they should both force themselves to vomit for the purpose of cleansing their bodies. So the narrative goes that midway through the journey

[23] For a similar discussion about problems of defining who is nomadic and who is not, see (Ahmed, 1994). In fact agropastolarism may be a more meaningful characterization for the larger parts of the society in the central and the south. As for the north a more meaningful description would be a mixture of agropastolarism and fishing.

the brothers became so hungry that they ate the meat of a dead animal. However, after they reached their final destination, the younger brother followed his father's advice and forced himself to vomit, while the older bother refused to do so. What happened after that is well known. The descendants of the younger brother became the nobles while those of the older brother became the Midgaans.

The delegitimisation process for the Jareer did not even require such an elaborate narrative. This is mainly so because of their alleged African characteristics as opposed to those of the Somali, whatever that might mean. Thus, they are simply categorized as *Adoon* meaning slave or *Jarer* meaning kinky hair. In other situations, they are called the *Gosha*, meaning people of the bush, or *reer Shabelle* meaning people of the Shabelle River. This problem is compounded by the majority of scholars who still insist implicitly that they are mainly runaway slaves initially enslaved from the east African Coast. The truth of the matter is that the majority of these people are spread around all over southern Somalia and have been there for centuries.[24]

Some of the consequences of these narratives were felt structurally from 1960 until the collapse of the state in 1990. The protectors of the narrative culture with the help of the Italian colony initially have dominated the state and the civil service. They have in a way started what Ahmed referred to as the dervisization of the state. At the center of the dervisization process was the reification of Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan into almost a prophetic status as the father of Somali nationalism, while ignoring the contributions of other leaders like Sheikh Aways. Even more disturbing was the neglect of the everyday struggles that the common people carried with the Italian colony for over half a century. The actions of these people are seen as mere incidents, while those of the Darvish is seen as a national movement. By the middle of the Siyaad Barre'e tenure, every national hero

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[24] The work of Omar Enow, about slavery in Southern Somalia, will no doubt enhance our understandings about the experience of the so-called Jareer people in Somalia.

was from the perpetuators of the narrative culture.[25] Thus the activities of Siyaad Barre, and by extension, his regime was very much in line with process of the Dervisization of the national identity. An identity that first and foremost mythically descended from the Prophet's family through *Jabarti Carbeed.* This process was later carried on by Ahmed Gurey and then Sayid Mohamed Abdulle Hassan and to the Rashid and Rizaaq administration of the sixties culminating with the Siyaad Barre regime.

The rest of the society was characterized as pro colony and anti nationalists. A good example of that is the accusation of Hassan Barre Tohow, one of the notables in Mogadishu during the 1950's and 1960's, for killing Hawa Tako, the supposedly mother of the Somali nationalism. This accusation meant to characterize Hassan Barre Tohow and by extension his clan as impeding the activities of the nationalist group (Ahmed, 1996). Another interesting incident in 1950's was the accusation of Abdulkadir Zoobe, one of the greatest political leaders that country had known. Abdulkadir Zoobe was accused of killing Kamal Al-din Salah, the Egyptian born trusteeship envoy to simply discredit him from pursuing national political aspiration. Zoobe was arrested but later acquitted of the charges. I have spoken with Zoobe in 1993, in Baidoa, and he told me that there was a conspiracy intended to discredit him. We are not sure of the details of the case, but it is highly unlikely that he would kill him. At least there were no political reasons why he would do so.

By the end of the 1980's, though, these narratives started to loose ground. First, in accordance of the arguments of this chapter, they did not acquire hegemonic legitimacy in that they were contested along the way. And second, the contents of the narrative themselves did make any meaning in the 1980's. In other words, being the mythical descendants of the *Jabarti Carbeed* did not make that much sense among the people. In

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[25] In order to enforce the dervisization of the state, Siyaad established himself as the father of the nation by making himself the fourteenth of the original thirteen founders of the Somali Youth League.

fact, the Arab origin and reification of nomadism experienced a sort of a backlash in the late 1980's. This is because by that time a large number of Somalis traveled abroad both to the middle east/Africa, and to Europe. The idea of claiming something that was not African made only sense in Somalia. Once outside Somalia, everybody seemed African in the eyes of others both Arabs and Europeans. In other words, claiming descend from Arabia had its own historical time in that those claimed direct descent from Arab immigrants enjoyed a more favorable position both politically and economically. But during the height of the civil war another movement which accused those who claimed direct descent from Arabia as foreigners and thus should leave the country. The general conclusion which is clear throughout this chapter is that the main reason behind the Somali civil war has been the contestation/contradiction between the state supported national narrative culture and the empirical culture of everyday people. This same conclusion, albeit in a different way is provided by Ahmed and I will use his comments to conclude this chapter in that as he points out,

> The fate of the proverbial person attempting to straddle two horses needs no further comment. The Somalis are also aware of the consequences of such attempts. As the lyric of a popular Somali song have it, the endeavors of the straddler is compared a she camel that likes to rest in the shade simultaneously under two trees.

The main idea behind this apt comment, at least for the present study, is that the perpetrators of the national narrative culture straddled both the narrative culture and the empirical culture simultaneously without realizing the two cultures were speeding in opposite directions through the entire history of the society. It is simply due to this contradiction/contestation that buried the seeds within from which the current social disorganization germinated. What is important to add here, though, since the forthcoming chapters of this study are concerned with Somalis in Canada is that the Somali social structure with its inherent contestations/contradiction are carried over. This

as we will see, is apparent from how clan differences transformed into community organizations are transported to Canada.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide the pre-migration cultural and sociopolitical background that has laid the foundation within which the Somali migration to Canada can be comprehended. I began this chapter by discussing the general causes of the Somali civil war. Starting with the causes of the Somali civil war is very important in that it is fundamental to understanding the nature of the Somali migration to Canada. This is also a very good starting point for the understanding of the over all nature of the Somali society and its culture as it relates to how it is reproduced in Canada. The main argument of this chapter has been that the main cause of the Somali civil strife must be seen in the contradiction between the state supported national narrative culture and the empirical culture. The first and the main contradiction between these two narratives is the assumed homogeneity of the society and the diverse reality nature of the Somali reality. The second contradiction is the assumed egalitarian and the narratively based hierarchy of the society. the main conclusion of this chapter is that the main cause of the Somali civil war is a result between the contradictions/contestations between these two narratives.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS II: THE PROCESS OF MIGRATION

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process of migration by Somalis going to Canada. Life history interviews of Somalis in Toronto provide the bulk of the data. The main questions raised in this chapter are why and how people move from one country to another. In other words, I am concerned with the motives for migration and the process involved in reaching a desired final destination. These questions form the two pillars of the migration process referred to here as the exit experiences and encounters on the road. Exit experiences refer to the obstacles that individuals face when trying to leave their countries. The exit experiences can be either dramatic in the case of those who move due to civil wars or politically motivated migrations. Or they can be eventless as in the case of economically based motives. However, as we will see later, this distinction is not a clear-cut situation in that dramatic and non-dramatic experiences are found in all situations of migration. Encounters on the road refers to the experience and the obstacles that individuals face while they are between Somalia and Canada. The encounters process is conceptualized in terms of migration chains and routes. This concept is intended to capture the experiences of these individuals in terms of the multiple routes and the number of potential host countries that they go through, the time frame as well as the social and individual interactions involved in the process of reaching a desired final destination. The first part of the chapter provides a descriptive picture of the factors involved in the process of migration as it relates to both exit experiences and encounters on the road. These factors include, but are not limited to motives, migration networks, migration routes and chains, the process of determination, and return migration. This will be followed by a more complex analysis of the process of migration in terms of why and how people migrate. This will be done through data of the actual experiences of the

respondents based on their narrative history. The final section of the chapter will discuss the process of refugee determination in Canada as it relates to Somali immigrants. In this section, I will examine the techniques that the Canadian Refugee and Immigration Board use to determine who is considered a refugee and who is not, as well as the strategies that the Somali refugee claimants use in order to receive a favorable determination outcome. However, before going into the analysis of the process of migration, I will provide a brief history of the Somali migration to Canada based on interviews on some of the first Somali immigrants to Canada.

The History of the Somali Migration to Canada

The history of the Somali migration and settlement in Canada is a very recent phenomenon. Refugee statistics in Canada suggest that in 1984 there were only ten Somalis in Canada. By 1991, this figure had increased to some 12,964 individuals. The Somalis themselves have also recognized this dramatic increase in the number of Somalis who settled in Canada over the last decade. For example, one of my respondents talked about this dramatic increase in terms of the needs of the community: "What I can tell you is that the number of Somalis in this country is increasing day after day and that we need the work that you are doing".

Despite this dramatic short time settlement of the Somalis in Canada, their initial arrival goes back to the early 1970's. There were about a dozen Somalis in Toronto in the mid 1970's according to one of the first Somali immigrants, who said:

> Yeah, I came to this country in 1975, and landed in Montreal. I was received in Montreal by a friend of mine named Abdi who also assisted me in coming to Canada. When I arrived in Montreal, I was impressed, see at that time, Montreal was a very international city. I was really impressed despite the fact that I have seen many cities in Europe. However, soon after arriving, I decided to check out other cities and places in the country. Before I left Montreal though, I met several Somali guys there. I met Sabriye who just got married to a young Somali lady. I also met Jibril, a medical doctor trained in East Germany who now lives in British Colombia. Any way, after three months I decided to move to Toronto. I didn't

know any one in Toronto at the time, and I was accompanied by my friend from Montreal. We tried to look for any Somalis in Toronto. After three days of looking and no luck, my friend called one of his friends in Montreal in case he knew someone in Toronto. One of the Somali guys in Montreal gave us the number of this Somali man who later welcomed us. He was a seaman himself who got off of a ship in Edmonton and later moved to Toronto. Hassan, who then, worked as a watchman received us, he gave us a place to sleep, settled us literally. He also told us that there were few other Somali guys in the city including an engineer trained in the Soviet Union called Farah. There was also another guy called Abdulle whom I luckily met at a Bar. Interesting enough, this guy was one of my class mates in high school back home, he truly took a heavy load of worries off of my shoulder.

At that time I came as a refugee and it took me about six months to get my papers. You know, people without papers were not allowed to work and there was no assistance of any sort at the time. But my friends helped me and I did night work here and there. See the only people who were allowed to receive assistance at the time were the Native Canadians. It was like every body fend for your own self. Form there on it was the challenges of life. It was a lot of work, a lot of fun. I worked in a Gas station, I was a dishwasher, you name it. Slowly, slowly, after that I started university. It took me about three years to finish. Within those three years though, a lot of Somali youngsters arrived. Included in this group are Waberi and his friend Ali. There was also Haweeyo who after a while returned to Somalia and later came back and a couple of other guys. Later we also found one gentleman who had lived in Brazil the twenty years prior to that and who was in Toronto for about five years at the time with his wife in fact from Brazil. Looking back, I can practically call these individuals "the Pioneers". As for their backgrounds, they were mostly individuals that migrated through Saudi Arabia, or some highly educated individuals who became dissatisfied with Siyaad Barre's October Socialist revolution. By 1980, slowly and slowly the community reached some one hundred individuals.

After 1984, a second wave of a new generation arrived who were very adventurous too. These individuals were less educated than the first. They were less fluent in English too. Of course there were many individuals in this wave who spoke English very well, some of them from Kenya and others who graduated from University in Somalia. Between 1984-1989, the number of the Somali community reached some 4000-5000 individuals. A large number of these individuals were also earlier immigrants to Saudi Arabia who later decided to move to Canada. Those who came at the end of the 1980's also included refugees from the government initiated war in northern Somalia.

The largest and the last wave came after 1990. By that time, people escaped from all over Somalia as a result of the generalized civil war. The civil war affected almost all the people and resulted in a massive movement from the country, which later brought a large number of people to Toronto. Thus, the history of the Somali migration and settlement is that the first groups were the pioneers and the rest were easy sailors because the route was paved for them. There are now some

> 70,000 Somalis in Canada. The Somalis have changed the face of Toronto. They are the first African community who organized their own political party, the first black African community who created a political party. They have the Ontario Somali Liberal Party, they also joined the National Democratic Party. Today, every bank that you go in Toronto has a Somali working there; they have their own travel agency and all sorts of things.

Thus the first Somali immigrants and refugees were located either in Montreal or Toronto. They came roughly between 1970 to 1980. The majority of these individuals graduated from high school or university in Somalia and spent a few years in Saudi Arabia before migrating to Canada. By 1984, a new generation arrived that was somewhat different from the earlier ones in that they were not as much educated. However, many of them graduated at least from high school. By 1988, the number of Somalis in Canada reached between 4000 to 5000. This third wave was largely comprised of refugees who came as a result of the government initiated war in northern Somalia, or other individuals who realized that the country was declining both politically and economically and who had the opportunity and the means to leave. The largest and the final wave came after 1990. These were individuals who left Somalia as refugees because of the generalized civil war in Somalia. However, it is very important to note that by this time, a large number of Somalis who were also outside the country either in Europe, Africa, or the Middle East joined the movement to Canada.

Descriptive Aspects of the Migration Process

Table 2
Year of Migration: Based on the responses to the question, "when did you first migrate from Somalia?"
N=30

Year	Frequency	%
Before 1988	9	30
1988 and after	21	70
Total	30	100

As noted in Table 2, the majority (70%) migrated after 1988, while 30% migrated before 1988. Based on this, we can say that the majority of the respondents migrated after the civil war and their migration would conventionally be considered as refugees, while the 30% that migrated before 1988 could be seen as immigrant types. Table 3 provides a percentage description of the motives for migration among the Somalis in Toronto. As can be noted in the table, 17% of the respondents migrated due to economic conditions, while 43% of the respondents migrated because of political reasons. The remaining 13% were physically pushed by the civil war and thus could be considered as representing the classical refugee. Another 8% migrated because of education, marriage, or health reasons.

Table 3
Motives for Migration: Based on the responses to the question, "why did you leave Somalia?"
N=30

Motives	Frequency	%
Economic	5	17
Political	13	43
Civil war	4	13
Other*	8	27
Total	30	100

*Refers to motives based on education, health, or migration through marriage.

However, if we collapse the two categories political and civil war and also collapse the other two categories of economic and other, we can see that 56% of the respondents migrated because of political reasons while 44% of the respondents migrated because of economic and other opportunities.

Table 4
Migration networks: Based on the responses of the question, "did you have any relatives in Canada prior to your migration?"
N=30

Networks	Frequency	%
Yes	19	63
No	11	37
Total	30	100

Table 4 discusses the presence and/or the absence of networks. As noted in the table, the respondents had either friends or family members that helped them both in terms of material and /or information to migrate from Somalia to Canada as compared 37% who migrated without the disposition of such networks. Thus, the majority of the respondents had some relatives, or at least information about how to reach Canada, before they migrated. Thus, unlike the literature on international migration, which

suggest that economic immigrants employ social networks to facilitate their migration process, while refugees do not, the present data suggest that refugees use migration networks as much as immigrants do.

Table 5
Migration Chains and Routes: Based on the responses of the question, "how many countries did you go through while trying to reach Canada, and what were these countries?"
N=30

Number of Chains	Frequency	%
1-2	20	67
3 or more	10	33
Total	30	100

Table 5 shows the number of countries that individuals go through in order to reach their final destinations. As it is clear from the Table, a large number of the respondents traveled through several countries in order to reach their final destination. Looking at the Table we can see at least 67% of the respondents went through 1-2 countries and 33% went through 3 or more countries. This generally shows that the experiences of the Somalis in Toronto can not be characterized in what Keller (1975) referred as the refugee stages from flight to camp to a third safe country. Table 6 (page 101) below shows a more interesting picture about the process of migration chains and the routes which entail the process of migration in terms of the nature and the number of countries that individual immigrants go through in order to reach a desired final destination. As it is clear from Table 6, none of the respondents experienced refugee camps before reaching Canada. In fact, the largest number of individuals traveled through refugee receiving countries such as the United States and several European countries. This simply indicates that the respondents had the choice to decide which country to migrate to. Thus, overall, the data indicate that the migration experiences of refugees can not be analytically distinguished from those of immigrants.

Table 7 (page, 102) presents data on intentions to return to Somalia. Based on the information in the Table, the majority (60%) of the respondents indicate that they intent to return to Somalia, while 20% do not intent to return. Another 20% are either unsure or did not respond. However, as I will show later, the intention to return is totally different from its actualization. The majority of the respondents may entertain the idea of return, but the question remains whether they are capable of returning.

So far I have provided some descriptive data about the process of migration among the Somali immigrants in Canada. Specifically, I have provided descriptive data pertaining to year of migration, motives, migration routes and chains, migration networks, and return migration. In the next section, I will discuss these variables in terms of the actual responses of the respondents. The reason for doing this is to go beyond the simple univariate analysis and into a more complex discussion of the process of migration through a detailed analysis of the everyday experiences of the respondents. For example, as we will see later, the process of return migration is more complex than what can be observed from the univariate analysis provided in Table 6. Individuals may wish to return, but the process of return migration is conditioned by both the conditions in the home and host countries. I will start with a summary table of the categories involved in the process of migration and move to a qualitative description of the process of migration and refugee determination processes. Table 8 (page 102) is a summary description of the univariate analysis. Based on this table, two generalized social types referred to here as refugee types and immigrant types can be derived. The categorization of these social types is guided by Blumer's (1969) distinction between sensitizing and definitive concepts. According to Blumer, sensitizing concepts suggest the appearance of social behaviors, but do not necessarily capture social reality in its actual state. On the other hand, definitive concepts provide more accurate prescriptions of social reality. Thus, these social types are used here as sensitizing in that they are of approximations of refugee or immigrant types. The emergence of these social types is also based on the

literature in that generally refugees are seen as having politically-based motives, lack networks during their migration process, are always willing to return, and leave their countries because of some political events such as revolutions, persecutions, and/or civil wars. On the other hand, immigrants are said to move due to economic reasons and other opportunities. They almost always have some kind of networks, do not usually intend to return except for visitation, and in short are informed about their routes and destinations. However, as I will show in the forthcoming section, these distinctions are not definitive social types in that some immigrants may lack networks, while refugees have them, or those considered as refugees may have economic motives also.

Table 6
Migration Routes Among Somali Refugees in Canada.

Case#	Routes	Number of Chains
1.	Somlia-U.S.-Canada	2
2.	Somlia-U.S.-Canada	2
3.	Somalia-India-Canada	2
4.	Somalia-Pakistan-Italy-US-Canada	3
5.	Somalia-Italy-Canada	2
6.	Somalia-India-Canada	2
7.	Kenya-Belgium-Canada	2
8.	Somalia-Djibiti-U.S.-Canada	3
9.	Somalia-Italy-Canada	2
10	Somalia-U.S-Canada	2
11.	Somalia-Saudi Arabia-Canada	2
12.	Somalia-Belgium-U.S.-Canada	3
13.	Somalia-U.S.-Canada	2
14.	Kenya-Canada	1
15.	Somalia-Kenya-Uganda-U.S.-Canada	4
16.	Somalia-Canada	1
17.	Somalia-Kenya-Canada	2
18.	Somalia-Egypt-Germany-Canada	2
19.	Somalia-U.S.-Canada	2
20.	Somalia-Kenya-Italy-England-Germany-Canada	6
21.	Somalia-U.S.-Canada	2
22.	Somalia-France-Holland-U.S.-Canada	4
23	Somalia-Saudi Arabia-US-Canada	3
24	Somalia-Egypt-Russia-Canada	3
25	Somalia-Italy-Canada	2
26	Kenya-United States-Canada	2
27.	Somali-S.Arabia-Iraq-Jordan-Russia-Canada	5
28.	Somalia-Ethiopia-Canada	2
29.	Somalia-S.Arabia-Ethiopia-Canada	3
30.	Somalia-United States-Canada	2

Table 7
Return Migration: Based on the responses of the question, " will you ever go back to Somalia?"
N=30

Intention to Return	Frequency	%
Yes	18	60
No	6	20
Unsure	3	10
No Response	3	10
Total	30	100

Table 8
Categories involved in the Process of Migration

	Immigrant Types	Refugee Types
Year		
Before 1988	30%	
1988 and after		70%
Motives		
Economic	17%	
Political		43%
Civil war	13%	
Other		27%
Networks		
Yes	63%	
No		37%
Chains		
1-2		67%
3 or more	33%	
Return		
Yes		63%
No	37%	

Motives and Migration

What I have discussed so far is a simple description of the process of migration. I suggested that the process entail several categories that can be used to simultaneously capture the experiences of those who migrate in its entirety and provide an initial analytical framework that can be used to somewhat sociologically distinguish refugee types from immigrant types. However, the process can not be captured in such simple univariate descriptions, because the migration experiences of individuals entails more than just few categories. Of course, some individuals may fit into one of those categories. In other words, some individuals have been pushed by the civil war and can be placed in the refugee type category as the following respondent indicates:

> In 1990, I mean in 1991 around 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon, at the time when people were coming back from work, something happened in downtown Mogadishu, huge, huge explosions. When this happened every body went back to their homes, so like my father came back, but said that there is no problem maybe some people are just fighting in the market, but it is going to be O.K., it will settle down. As time went by it became louder and louder, and we still stayed inside the house. See we lived in *Casa populare,* so the people in *Hawlwadaag* started to move out of their houses to I don't know where on their feet. This was around three o'clock in the afternoon. Then someone told us that every body was moving out of the city, even though they don't know where they are going. Any way, more and more people started to vacate, and leave their homes walking with their children. Around six o'clock the shelling stopped a little bit and people went back to their houses, but the shelling started again, it continued, continued, continued, and continued.
>
> The next morning, I said father, every body is leaving the city, we should go too. Then he said no we are going to stay, nothing will happen because we didn't do harm to anybody, so no one will harm us either, we will stay were we are. We stayed in the house for another day, and ate what we had in the house. Now it is the third day, the city almost looked empty, the neighbors left, my dad still insisted to stay, he said again nothing will happen, these people will come back, no problem. No one came back; it was now the fifth day and the machine guns were still sounding, I guess we were a little bit lucky, nothing happened to us in those four days. The fifth day we decided to go. Now we are five of us children, one of my brothers was in North America at the time, five girls and one boy, one niece, my grandmother who was literally old, my dad, my aunt, and my aunt's daughter. So we left, there is nothing that you can take from the

house because you don't know where you are going to, we took some food. Every body had to carry some rice, spaghetti, grain, and sugar, every one had to take whatever they could, nothing else but food. So we left, but we don't know where we were going, it was like remember during the October revolutionary parades near the *Tiribuno*, it was just like that, all the people are walking in the same direction without knowing where they are going, it is like the *Haj*, they don't know where they going. We walked, walked, and walked until we reached my uncle's in Madino because my *Ayeeyo* could not walk. What is *Ayeeyo* being carried with? *Gaari Gacan*. The *Gari Gacan* is being pushed by my brother. We came to the house in *Madino* where already many people who run away from the city gathered into. We stayed there for one day. The next day, my father went back to the house and found it with many bullet holes. So he came back right away, because, I guess he couldn't stand the loneliness there. So we stayed in *Madino* for one more day. By this time, the war was spreading all over the city, people say it is coming and they move further, further, and further. Now we left *Madino*, where are we going? *Lafoole*. I don't know how far *lafoole* is from Mogadishu.

Anyway, we left the city, there are no cars, or any other means of transportation, so we walked. Before we left *Madino*, however, my brother and my cousin went back to the house in *Casa Populare* once again, but before they entered they found *one of the militia groups* was already there. As they tried to enter the house, my cousin was shot and injured. So anyway, we started to walk all the way to *Lafoole*. My grand mother is being carried, my cousin could not walk, so we had to stop for him all the time to give him some rest. We walked for two days and half. There were many people, many people you don't know also walking in the same direction, it was very hot, too. We walked and walked, after two days, ... we reached *Lafoole*. Then we found a place in one of the dormitories and faculty houses of the College of Education in *Lafoole*, and started a new life there with whatever little food we had with us. There was also a small food market in *Lafoole* for stolen food from the city so we bought some of that, too. At other times, we took food that was left over by people who moved further south. See there were a lot of families already in *Lafoole* who came maybe several days before. We were there for about twenty-seven days. The people who lived in the villages near the college, you know, or *bushaska brought* firewood for sale too, and that is how we cocked our food. The day Siyaad Bare left Mogadishu which was about January 19, or the 29th, the Siyaad Barre people started to run for their life too, it was their turn now I guess. I didn't know where they were going either, but, by now, everything seemed calm, and my father said O.K., let us go back to Mogadishu. But before we all returned my father went to Mogadishu alone to check the situation in the city. By the time he got to the house, it was hit by a canon. Everything in the house was also stolen too, I mean everything, the carpet, the beds, all our household stuff, you know. On top of that my *Ayeeyo* became sicker and couldn't walk with us back again; my cousin who was injured could not come back with us

either. By this time, my father decided to go to northern Somalia, but see all of us were born and raised in Mogadishu so we didn't want to go to the north and he knew that too. Anyway, we brook into two groups those who wanted to go to northern Somalia, and those who wanted to go back to Mogadishu.[26]

Any way, *Ayeeyo*, my aunt, and my younger sister who is here with me now, and my niece were put into a truck that was going to northern Somalia, and we came back to our house in Mogadishu, half broken down. We were there for about ten days without going out, we were four women, and my brother and my father. It was really hard, there was no peace and you never knew what will happen during the night or the next day. Any way, we had this neighbor called *reer* Hassan Jisow, we slept in their house during the nights, just the women because everything could happen, it was not safe. We did that for another two months. After that, my father decided that the situation was hopeless and we took this truck that was going to the north. See the paved roads were filled with dynamite. So the trucks had to drive through the pushes. We went through Baidoa, and stayed there for few days. It took us from Hamar to Jigjiga about thirty days in what would have taken two days only during the normal times. What happens is that we drive for a whole day and the next day they say it is the wrong way, then we take the opposite direction and they will say it is the wrong way again, it was too confusing. We had no food either, the place was full of Shifto looking for people to pray on. While we were driving through Baidoa, it was peaceful, when we passed Hudur, there was *Shifto* every few miles, they see the trucks from far away, so they take what ever they want, do whatever ever they want, you are their property that is it. There are some wells that we saw near Hudur, which they said it was for the Camels, I am talking about 1977. The water from these wells were dirty, it was a terrible situation. After we reached Ethiopia, that was also the time that the Ethiopians were fighting with Mengisto. So their gangs also started robbing every body specially the Somalis. One morning as the trucks were moving we were ambushed by *Shifto*, the driver did not stop the car and they fired at us. then several people died right there and some others were injured. The number of people who died during the journey is countless, those who died because of lack of food are even more. Sometimes the *Shifto* attack during the night while every body is sleep and kill one or two. After we reached Ethiopia about seven o'clock in one evening we encountered the last *shifto*, see we can see Jigjiga, but we can't enter, you know because of some rules. It was those Somalis that settle in Ethiopia, you see they don't care about who you are, they just robe you, they took everything they could take from us. They even injured some people in one of the other trucks. Finally, we reached Jigjiga in the morning.

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[26] [the discussion became very emotional, the respondent started to cry, and it was a very disturbing experience]. The discussion resumed some minutes later.

Other respondents have experienced similar exit situations. One of the respondents, for example, was planning the wedding of sister in-law on the eve of civil war without any knowledge of what was to come. As he succinctly said:

> Well, I was working for the government at the time. One day, my wife's sister was being married, a friend of mine was actually marrying her, so we went to Baidoa for the wedding. In Mogadishu at that time, there were signs of gang violence every where specially in Hawlwadaag. Any way, I locked my house without taking anything, and went to the wedding. It was in December 30, or 31, 1990 at about 2:00 p.m.. Halfway through the journey, we saw some people that run away from Mogadishu, who asked us whether we were going to Hamar, no I said we came from Hamar. He said it started in Hamar, some of the people already left the city and everyone else is trying to leave now. I said to myself this is unreal. We finished our food and continued our journey anyway. It was Sunday now, and the wedding was planned for Monday night. After the wedding on Tuesday morning, all the government troops running from Hamar started to pass through the city, along with huge crowds of people just moving without any direction. I still thought this was unreal, the next day I thought the same thing.
>
> But by the third day the war spread, I lost my house and 50 million Somali shillings right there. The money was held for me by this businessman. I Also lost some U.S. dollars and Djibouti franc which was in the house too. So I never went back to Hamar, I didn't have any reason to go back. You can not go to Hamar, there is an ugly war. Then, in 1991, after Siyaad left, and Hamar seemed a little clam, I went back to my house. There was no single fork in the house. In fact, some gangs were now leaving in the house, it was not my house any way, it was rented, but all my household stuff were gone. So I left and went to my hometown and stayed there until the end of 1991. after 1991, I went back to Hamar again, but by that time, the war started again.... Then I went back to my hometown, because there was no another route to go to any where, you see I wanted to go to Kenya this time with all my family, my mother, my wife, and my children.

The above exit narratives fits very well into what Kunz (1973) referred to as acute refugee movements in that these individuals were caught in middle of the civil war without anticipating it and therefore migrated only when the situation had deteriorated to an intolerable point., As it is clear from their narratives, the respondents were somewhat

hesitant to leave the country, their property, and homes. For example, most of the respondents in this category have tried to go back to Mogadishu only to find the situation there has further deteriorated. It was this realization that set the journey in their mind. The respondents did not know where they were going, but knew that they had to leave. This is what Gilad (1996) and others have referred to as "refugees of civil strife".

Others, however, left the country in less dramatic situations. That is, these individuals anticipated the political crisis that the country was experiencing just before the actual civil war took place. These can be characterized as anticipatory refugees (see, Kunz, 1981) in that they have had the opportunity to plan their migration. One typical respondent in this category had to say this:

> It was in early 1990 when I realized that the country was not stable enough to live in. The country was in a complete, you know, complete, it was not in a complete, but close to being in a disaster. The government was very unstable, people did not get their salaries on time, they didn't have anything, you know, that was very, very bad and I thought that I can not work in that environment and even for security reasons. I remember, I remember we used to have security guards in my house which I believe was terrible and I remember having bodyguards back and forth to work. Yeah, that was in 1989, that was the time when I decided to leave the country for good and migrate to somewhere, anywhere.

Despite the fact that this respondent left the country for political reasons, it is also evident from her response that there were also economic concerns especially when she points out problems of salary and work environment. Given this understanding, then it is very difficult to separate political motives from economic ones.

Other respondents left the country several years prior to the civil war for purposes of education and later migrated to Canada without returning to Somalia. Still others left the countries where they were studying because the civil broke out while they were finishing their studies and thus could not return to Somalia. One respondent left Somalia in the early seventies through a government scholarship to a European country and after finishing migrated to Canada as a refugee

claimant in 1975. Another respondent left Somalia in 1989 through a self-acquired scholarship to another European country and after finishing was encouraged by his brother to come and visit the United States before going back to Somalia. He sums up his experience in the following:

> In 1989, I got a scholarship not from the government, but through my own self-made contact with outside Universities. I got acceptance from a Belgium University which gave me a chance, so I left the country without even the government knowing. I left in 1989, I came to Belgium to do a Masters Degree in Public Health. When I finished my master's degree I was intending to go back to Somalia, but I got a call from my brother and sister who were in United States at the time. They said, why are you going back, just before you go back came and see America. Then I though oh, O.K. Then they send an invitation letter and I came to the United States. In fact when I reached the United States, the civil war started at which point they said to me why are you going back, there is a civil war there. They also told me that Canada was good place to live, and that was the time I decided to go to Canada.

Another respondent left Somalia in 1984 for education purposes to Asia because he could not get an admission to any of the universities in Somalia. His brother who was working in Saudi Arabia at the time offered to support him to study in another country, which he did. He then migrated to Canada in 1988. This is what he had to say about his experience:

> I went to India for education, because getting education in Somalia was becoming very difficult. You could not get admission because of tribal nepotism, and constant bribing. The education system itself was also deteriorating. So I found this chance where my brother in Saudi Arabia promised to help get my education in India. I reached India in January 1985, I learned English in the first six months, Then in June I enrolled in Delhi University where I matriculated for three years and received a Bachelor of Commerce, which is what is known here as Business Administration . I left India in November 1988, and except the two times that I went to Somalia for vacation, I came directly to Canada.

Another respondent left Somalia in order to study in another Asian country because she was not admitted to the faculty that she wanted. This is her account:

> I left Somalia in 1982, because I could not get an admission to the

> University, well, they forced me to go to a faculty that I didn't like, so I decided to leave the country in search of education. This college was called Lafoole, which was intended to train primary school teachers. I didn't like it, I didn't want to became a teacher. So I went to Pakistan.

The respondent went back to Somalia for a vacation in 1987 for one month then went back to Pakistan to complete her studies and left for Italy to start her migration that finally ended up in Canada. When I asked her whether there was any kind of safety problems in Somalia when she first left, she said the following:

> No, no, at that time, the country was very good, there was no fear of any sort, the only problem was that people related to the government had better opportunities than others. So I did not leave for fear of persecution.

When I asked this same respondent whether she considered herself a refugee, she responded by saying:

> Yes, I did consider myself a refugee at the time, see because when I finished my university in Pakistan at the time, I could not go back to Somalia. When I went back to Somalia for vacation in 1988, I found that there was too much injustice in the country, because you could not find a job unless you are from one of the favored tribes, you could not even find a minimum wage job. So it was difficult for me to go back like a good citizen and not find a job at all.

As I have pointed out earlier, aside from the 13% (Table 1) who have been literally pushed out by the civil war, it is very difficult to characterize the rest in terms of the known image of the refugee as the wide-eyed children with bloated bellies that Rose (1981, 1993) emphasizes in his conceptualization of the understanding of refugees sociologically.

Instead, what the data here show is that the majority of Somalis in Toronto are a mixture of immigrants and refugees who left their homeland both for political and

economic reasons.[27] This does not necessarily mean, as we will see later, that they are not eligible for refugee status in Canada, but they do not conform to the stereotypical refugee. This distinction is very important in that policy-based refugee definitions is qualitatively different from sociological definitions.

The Somali refugee experience does not confine itself within those that came from the Somali republic alone; other Somali ethnic groups in other African countries have also joined this movement. One of the respondents, a 32 year old Somali Kenyan who left Kenya because she felt that she was discriminated against, suggests the following:

> Just before I left Kenya in 1991, I mean 1990, the Kenyan government decided to give Kenyan-Somalis an extra ID, an ID separate from the one every citizen has. It was intended to identify its carriers as Somali-Kenyans. This really made me feel so bad because I consider myself a Kenyan citizen just like every other citizen living in Kenya, so when they issued this ID. I thought Oh, God, I won't be able to live in this country having two ID's and going through this hardship, because everywhere you go whether it is the bank, or somewhere else they ask you for those two IDs. If you don't have them, they arrest you let alone serve you. And prior to that I had a couple of uncles whom the government deported back to Somalia despite the fact that they were Kenyan citizens. In Somalia too, there was still the war going on and it was horrible. So that is the time I decided to leave the country and come to Canada.

The distinction between a policy-based definiting refugee and a sociologically defined refugee appears when we look at the experiences of some of the respondents. Determining or labeling individuals on the bases of the political situation of the home country or their claim of refugee status creates conceptual problems when we look at situations where an individual is eligible for refugee status policy-wise but is not a refugee sociologically. For example, one of

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[27] Dorsh (1981:88) points out that the refugee problem is typically viewed in terms of filling only the immediate requirements of a needy people. The collection of documents and reports about refugees reflect with few exception, a logistical, legalistic concern, with little supporting qualitative scholarly material".

the respondents became eligible for refugee status after marrying a refugee. This is what this respondent said about her experience of becoming a refugee in Canada:

> I left Somali in 1983, well I wanted to leave even before that, I wanted to leave, because I pretty much finished as much I could then. I had a Pharmacy Diploma, I wet to Sidam and studied there for a couple of years, finished my high school and just wanted to get the hell out of there because I really wanted to study and my plan was to go to Abu-Dabi and work there for a couple of years and save enough money and go to the States, that was my plan. Then, I met my daughter's father who was a Burundian Refugee from Sudan working for the USAID in Somalia at the time. Well, we started courting, and maybe about maybe, he was much older man than I was, maybe I am attracted to older men and you know, we get married. I wasn't a refugee, and I did not want to stay in Somalia and I said I want to immigrate, so we wrote to Canada, and to the United States together, and he had a refugee status, I didn't.

Thus one does not become a refugee, at least behaviorally, just by becoming eligible for refugee status. The motive for migration is a very important aspects of the migration process in that it is one of most important arguments that is used to distinguish between refugees and immigrants. The main argument is that immigrants are motivated by economic reasons , while refugees are motivated by political reasons. However, what the data from the Somali community in Toronto indicate is that it is very difficult to separate economic motives from political ones. Whatever the arguments are, though, it is only but one aspect of the migration process. The migration process also entails many other aspects that must be understood if we are to get a full picture of the migration process. I turn next to migration routes and chains.

The Exit Process: Routes and Chains

The exit modes and routes of Somalis to Toronto is another good example of how the migration experiences of refugees can not be characterized into what some social researchers refer to the stages of refugee experiences (Keller, 1975,

Stein, 1981). In order to understand the experiences of any refugee or immigrant, one has to examine the exit routes that these individuals take in order to reach a desired final destination. The Somali community's experience shows that some individuals took straight flight from Mogadishu to their final destination while other took a more complex route. Whether one takes a simple eventless route or a more complex one depends on the availability of networks, information, and a host of other things. In the following section, I will examine what I heretofore refer to short and long migration chains. I will assume heuristically based on the literature, that immigrants will have short chains while refugees, especially those who are not government sponsored, will have longer chains because they are involved in figuring out the best way to go to their final destination by trying several alternative routes. As I have pointed out earlier, some of the respondents have taken a direct flight from Somalia to Canada, except the normal transit situations in which all passengers subjected too. The following is an example of a short chain involving no middle country between Somalia and Canada. This is what the respondent said about her experience:

> So this was no drama, no nothing, but a straight flight from Mogadishu to Rome. The personnel of the Canadian Embassy were waiting for us at the airport. They put us into what is called Canadian Airlines, it used to be called CP Air, to Montreal, Toronto, and finally to Winnipeg all taken care of by the Canadian Immigration officers, no problem. You see I am telling you, this is one of the least glamorous thing, there was no heroic thing involved, I never suffered one day in life, Yeah.

Another respondent with a short migration chain relates his experience this way:

> Well I was a civil servant, I knew my way quite well, I had money, I got a passport within one day. At that time we didn't need visa to travel to Canada, so I took an airplane to Canada showed them my Kenyan passport and told them that I was applying for political asylum and they knew what was going in Kenya with the Somali community and how they were being treated by the Kenyan government. See, at that time the Canadian High

> Commissioner was recalled because of that problem and the Kenyan counterpart was also recalled.

This case and several other similar ones provide interesting cases in that the respondents fit what the literature refers to as persecuted ethnic minorities, at least, that is what this respondent claimed. However, his *flight*, if I may use the word, was eventless as it is very clear from his narrative. What also made his exit eventless is the fact that he did not have to have a visa to travel to Canada and thus could travel to Canada as a tourist.

Some have exited with false pretenses, because there was no other way to get to Canada. This in fact, confirms my argument that the more difficult one faces in acquiring travel visa the longer the chain. Such individuals also end up using false pretenses not because they want to, but because they are desperate. As the following respondent puts it:

> I didn't have a visa to come to Canada, well, when I left Pakistan, I went to Italy. I took an Italian visa from Pakistan, I bought my ticket and arrived in *Roma*, then from Italy I came to Canada. I came to Canada illegally, because no one would give me a visa. Well, I used someone else's Passport to travel from Italy to the United States, I landed in New York. Then I went Buffalo, from there I went to the Canadian border near Buffalo.

Others have traveled through a more difficult situation and took longer chains. As the following responds points out:

> R: So we went to Kenya and by the time we got to Kenya, I mean, to the Somali quarters in Nairobi, you ask for your clan relatives, but when you see them, they say oh, you can't stay here because the police will come any time and give us problems. You better go to Uganda, so I went to Uganda and stayed for about six months there. In Uganda, it was like a camp, but it was not an official camp, you know, we used to assist each other and the persons who were really in need were helped by those who had money, specially women who sold their gold or what ever. So I sold my belongings and what ever I had to survive. Then I found this man, I don't know, Kenyan or Ugandan, he brought us documents to travel and took you to the airport. Well the way they do it, it is really business, and if

you really need it there are so many people, but sometimes they cheat you, and sometimes it is difficult to find them.

I: How did you find them?
R: Well because there are different people you are living with in the same place, or other Somalis who in live in other parts of the city. Some of these people go out and search for information on how to get out of Uganda, how to, you know, what to do. And then even though the connections were not that much good, there were connections. So I used to ask because I couldn't go out and used to give money to the young men so that they can find information for me. Yeah, usually, they are Somalis, even if you don't know them. So I give some money to some Somali guys, like you know, it is not an office, it is under the tree. Sometimes you put yourself in a dark whole, you know, and to my luck, it worked for me. I had around six thousand U.S. dollars, so it was not enough so I got some help from relatives, they helped me because I was getting sick, it was emotional and I was afraid that I might have problems in my kidney, you know. Any way everything worked out for the best and I was taken to the airport. See I was supposed to pretend the wife of this man. He told me you will pretend to be my wife and those are my kids. Well, we have been side by side throughout that whole time, but I was afraid to be asked questions that might make me nervous. So all the time I was smiling, that is all I could do [laugh, laugh]. And then, because I was confused and I never had a chance because he had all the documents, so what was I going to say in case they ask me something?. It was really a terrifying experience.

So any way, we stopped at some airport, it was not Italy, because I could understand, then we exchanged airplanes. See we didn't carry that much of luggage, because we were scarred of the possibility of being recognized by the fact that we are not the real people. So, like tourists, we took a little bit of luggage. By the time we got to New York, he took us to a Bar, we had some coffee and, you know, some sandwich. Then after we came out, he told me to get a bus. But I said I don't know about the bus, how can I get to the bus? Then you need to go and rent a car he said, he engaged a taxi to Canada for me, because when I was in Uganda, people told me that Canada was very good and that Canada is the best place for your life because they are very kind people, you know. So I was really dreaming about Canada at the time. Any way, I took the taxi to buffalo, and then they told us to go back to United States for about forty days. Then they told me that I can go to the church. Well O.K., but the church was full at the time, So they took me to this shelter place and there was no bed and I slept on the floor. I was really comfortable on the floor, I didn't care about a bed.

Still others have experienced a different kind of migration with more chains and strategic planning. A typical example of such planning of the exit

process is what the following respondent has experienced:

> I tried to find some visa, at the time, there were some lines where you would get a visa to Russia and go from there to Finland. So I got a Romanian visa in order to go to Russia with Aeroflot. I took the Romanian visa, at the time many people were taking the Romanian visa and we were all trying to take Aeroflot. See people are not really going to Romania, the aim is to take Aeroflot so that you can transit in Moscow and then take a train from Moscow to Finland. So it did not work for me because I could not get the Aeroflot ticket. The Aeroflot ticket itself become subject to underground market. You had to have either a Somali military officer who could speak Russian, or have some money, but I did not have either. So seven days before my Romanian visa expired, I also heard that the Russian line was also closing and that the Somalis in Russia are unable to leave to any other place.
>
> Now it is June 1990, then my cousin who is now here in Canada, but was in Cairo at the time, arranged an Egyptian visa for me and I went to Egypt. Anyway, we left Egypt in 1991 trying to get to Canada. We took a Cuban visa and was planning to take an Aeroflot that may transit through Moscow and Gandor, Newfoundland, before it reaches Cuba. Our intention was to defect in Gandor, but the line exploded in Russia.[28] By this time, the Somali civil war also started, there was also the Gulf war, so it was very difficult to go back to anywhere, so we ended up in Russia. I stayed in Russia until 1994.
>
> By the end of 1994, I was able to travel to Canada through some other lines where some Somali individuals who spoke Russian were connected to some Russians at Moscow airport. You give two thousand dollars to these people and they put you into a flight that transits through Gandor en route to Havana. That is how I ended up coming to Canada. See they are somehow attached to the immigration officers at the airport in Moscow, so you just pay them and buy your ticket and they put you in the plane that is it, and then they tell you when you reach Gandor tell them that you are a refugee that is it.

Another respondent had a very similar experience but from a different angle ending up in the same port of entry. As he puts it:

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[28] Line explosion here refers to situations where, at some point, airport authorities in some transit countries will find that these people are going to Gandor to defect. At a more political level, it may mean that the Canadian authorities have warned Aeroflot to make sure that unauthorized passengers are not transiting through Gandor. Similar situations with Europeans and Asians were reported by Lisa Gilad (1993). They were trying the same route to claim refugee status in Canada.

> I left Somalia in February 1987, I left because there were too many problems like forced military drafts. On top of that, there were no jobs there. I got my passport in 1985, and tried to get me a visa, but I could not get one. In 1987, I paid some bribe and I got the visa this time and went to Saudi Arabia. I was O.K. in Saudi Arabia, in that, at least economically, I was able to even support myself and send some money for my family, but there was no safety there either. See I had no *Iqama* and if you don't have *Iqama* in Saudi Arabia you are always in fear of the Police, they put you in *Tarxil.* Any way, I was there until 1989 and left Saudi Arabia because of this *Iqama* thing. At any rate, I gave this guy two hundred dollars to get me a visa for Iraq. I went to Iraq at the end of 1989. See Iraq was better than Saudi Arabia because the next day I was there I had a work permit, I found a good position in this company and worked there for quite sometime.
>
> I left Iraq because I saw many Somalis going to Europe at that time, so I realized that I could go to Europe too. I kept hearing that so and so went to Germany, and so and so went to Holland, you know, so I thought why don't you go to one of these places. Then I took an Egyptian Visa, then I got a Cuban visa from Egypt and I went Jordan. I stayed there for about two months. There was this guy at this travel agency in Damascus who arranges and puts you to flights to Cuba that go through Gandor. You give him two hundred dollars and that is it, you are on. I took a Jordanian Airline, we stooped in Cyprus for about four hours, this was June of 1990. I took Aeroflot from there all the way to Russia. I stayed in Moscow overnight. The next morning about 12:00pm, I left Russia with Cuban Airways in route to Havana. See my transit was in Gandor, so after I reached Gandor, Newfoundland I defected there. See I knew what to do, I heard this from some guys, we talk you knew, you get information that way.

Another important aspect of the migration process is migration routes. Migration routes provide important information about what kind of countries these individuals go through in order to reach their final destination. The type of countries that individuals go through may be determined by the proximity of that country to the desired final destination. Other situations may be determined by the opportunity that any particular country provides in terms of its easy access to board a flight that may lead to the final destination. Sometimes individuals may end in one country and later realize that it does not offer legal opportunities to potential refugees. For example, looking at Table 8, we can see that almost 50% of the respondents in the sample had migrated to the United States first before

migrating further to Canada. Several reasons may account for the U.S being the most favorite stop-by country for Somalis in route to Canada. First, the United States is the only adjacent country to Canada in which one can claim refugee status through in-land borders. Another important possibility is that may be it was easier for the Somali refugees to come to the United States with tourist and visit visas. One respondent says:

> When I finished my Masters Degree I was intending to go back to Somalia, but I got a call from my brother and sister who were in United States at the time. They said, why are you going back, just before you go back came and see America. Then I thought oh, O.K., then they send an invitation letter and I came to the United States, and later migrated to Canada.

The respondent had siblings both in the United States and Canada, but later decided to move to Canada. The reason why this respondent moved to Canada was because since he came as visitor to the United states, it would have been impossible to change his visitor status to that of a refugee. But for Canada, he could go there fresh and claim refugee status. Another respondent sums up the problems relating to coming as a student or a visitor in the United States and wanting to change that status to that of a refugee. She says:

> I was going to high school and to pay a private high school was really becoming difficult. My family could not manage that and also, it was difficult to change my immigration status in the United States. In the United States at that time, it was difficult to get a political asylum status, but in Canada, it was much easier so I decided to settle here than in the U.S.

Another respondent left the United States to Canada for similar reasons. As she puts it:

> In 1989, I was in Virginia with my maternal aunt, my mother joined me in 1990 to see how I was doing both in my health and about school. Then, some people told us that we can apply for residency in the United States.

> But since my father got the visa for me it would have been a problem to stay in the United States longer. But also, in Virginia, there was my aunt who not was really a family member, so I decided to go to Canada to join my uncles in Canada.

Others have heard about Canada before they left Africa and the United States was not their final destination, but was the only available routes through which they could get to Canada. Canada was also attracting a lot of Somalis at the time because a large Somali community was forming in Toronto . As the following respondent simply puts:

> Well, I decided to go to Canada because that was just about the time when a lot of Somalis were immigrating to Canada.

Another important factor that attracted initially a large number of Somalis to Canada was the social welfare system including unemployment compensation, free health, and education. As one respondent puts it:

> Yes, definitely. In every aspect of life, when it comes to health insurance, social issues, housing issues, security issues and so forth. Canada is much better than America. Canada is more of a caring country, while America is too individualistic. Toronto is the most expensive city as you know, but the government provides housing, affordable housing for the poor. Also there is a better social assistance system in Canada. The health care system provides free medical care for unemployed, while in the States, you may die in the streets if you don't have a job than insures you, yeah. That is why, I mean, I am saying Canada is much better than the States. If you are immigrant, you'll get a better support in Canada than in US.

Others left the United States to Canada because elder siblings asked them to join them in Canada, as the flowing respondents points out:

> I just followed my brother's advice, he asked me to come over to Canada, and I just did that. I was planning to stay in the United States, but he insisted that I come to Canada.

What is clear from the exit routes and chains is that the number of chains or the specific routes that the Somali refugees took to get to Canada totally defies the traditional routes that the literature about refugees migrations provides. Refugee migration routes are mainly characterized in term of stages that start with flight and then to a temporary asylum, usually a neighboring country, and finally to a resettlement country, usually at a country in Europe or North America. However, the routes taken by the Somali refugees are more globally dispersed. That is, the Somali refugees went through many countries in the world in order to reach Canada. This process was made possible by social networks shared by the refugees no matter where they are. Next I turn to issues migration networks.

The Migration Process and Social Networks

The social networks of the Somali refugee migration involve multi-nation networking that merges both financial support among kith and kin and a complicated web of information sharing. One of the respondents said, "We talk, you know, we talk, and you fill the rest on your own". The talk or the information- sharing process takes many shapes and forms. In some points of the networks, some individuals within the refugee community work as information agents or middleman between the refugees and people who might be able to provide important information that can be used by the community in order to get out of the first country of asylum.[29] This information can be looking for someone, a citizen of one of those countries who can travel to Europe and North America

[29] Refugees are not interested in staying in the country of the first asylum. These countries are usually neighboring countries that are themselves economically depressed and can not provide any economic opportunities for the refugees. Most of the time, during their stay in one of those country, they are dependent on international aide. The main aim of refugees is to get to Europe or North America. In the case of the Somali refugees, the most favorite country was Canada. At any rate, it is during the time that they stay in one of those first asylum countries that they engage in a very well organized information gathering networks.

and who is willing to take some money for exchange. That was the experience of the following respondent, who puts it this way:

> R: So I sold my belongings and whatever in order to survive. Then I found this man, I don't know, Kenyan or Ugandan, he brought us documents to travel and took me to the airport.
>
> I: How did you find this man?
> R: Well because there are different people you are living with in the same place, or other Somalis who in live in other parts of the city. Some of these people go out and search for information on how to get out of Uganda, how to, you know, what to do. And then even though the connections were not that much good, there were connections. So I used to ask because I couldn't go out and used to give money to the young men so that they can find information for me. Yeah, usually, they are Somalis, even if you don't know them. So I give some money to some Somali guys, like you know, it is not an office, it is under the tree. Sometimes you put yourself in a dark whole, you know, and to my luck, it worked for me. I had around six thousand U.S. dollars, so it was not enough so I got some help from relatives, they helped me because I was getting sick, it was emotional and I was afraid that I might have problems in my kidney, you know. Any way everything worked out for the best and I was taken to the airport. See I was supposed to pretend the wife of this man. He told me you will pretend to be my wife and those are my kids. Well, we have been side by side throughout that whole time, but I was afraid to be asked questions that might make me nervous. So all the time I was smiling, that is all I could do [laugh, laugh]. And then, because I was confused and I never had a chance because he had all the documents, so what was I going to say in case they ask me something?. It was really a terrifying experience.

Sometimes it is a brother or a sister assisting another brother or sister. As the following respondent points out:

> My brother was already in Canada, and he called me to say came and stay with us., that is all. Also, my brother send me some money.

Others had friends that came before them who relayed all the information necessary to migrate to Canada. As the following respondent puts it:

> Yes, There was a friend of mine who is actually graduating from this University here, I think this year. I used to call him from India, he gave me

> all the addresses that I needed, and all the information, since he was six months, actually five months here before me. He gave me all the information such as how to claim refugee status and after I came, how to adjust to life in Canada.

The information sharing includes individuals inside the country warning their relatives already abroad who may be planning to go back to Somalia not to do so because the political situation in the country is very stable. This is because those inside the country are more informed about what is going on in the country. As the flowing respondent puts it:

> The first time I though about going to Canada was at the end of 1988. I was planning to go Somalia and work there. But when I saw many Somali student in India leaving for Canada, and also because of my brother who was in Somalia convinced me that there wasn't much in Somalia, and send me some money to go to Canada. I was at that time that I decided to go to Canada.

Information is even shared by strangers aboard airplanes about where to go and which country is the best to migrate to. As the this respondent puts it:

> why did I select Canada? Well, I think I wanted to be so far (laugh, laugh) away from home. I wanted to be so far from this horrible thing which was going to happen to me and my family with the ID thing, and may be being deported to Somalia without any reason, and all these things. I thought maybe if I go very far this thing will leave me alone, yeah. I got like a friend, a friend who was herself leaving the country. She visited Canada before, she liked the place and she told me I think if you go to Canada you will be much better than going anywhere else in Europe, but my whole thing was not really, my whole heart was not fixed on coming to Canada. My plan was to go to any- where in Europe. So while I was in this plane, I was talking with a bunch of people, and most of these people were coming to Canada, so that is the time when I made my decision when I reached Brussels.
>
> See, I wanted to stay in Brussels, I wanted to claim refugee status in Brussels and say I want to live in Brussels as a refugee, but these two guys told me, no you can't, people here speak most French, you have to move where people will understand you. Why don't you try, why don't you give a chance, we are going there,

> there is no big deal, we will go there and then things are going to fall on place, so we came here (Canada).

I have mentioned earlier how information networks operate in some of the first asylum countries, but as is clear from the response of the following respondent, the networks are interconnected as far as Moscow. These networks, or "lines" as the Somalis call them, are based on the understanding that Russian airplanes that leave Moscow en route to Cuba will stop over in Gandor in order to refuel. Once individuals acquire this idea, their next step is to seek information about how to board these planes. This process is facilitated by Somali individuals who may have studied in Russia and either remained there after finishing their studies or returned to Russia as a result of the civil war. These individuals serve as middleman between Somalis seeking to migrate to Canada and the Russian immigration or airport officials. In other words, these middleman are connected to some Russian individuals who work at the airport or know someone that works there. This process is explained by the following respondent.

> I stayed in Russia until 1994. I come to Canada through some other lines where some Somali individuals who speak Russian are connected to Some Russians who work at the airport or in the immigration office. You give two thousand dollars to these people and they put you into a flight that transits through Gandor en route to Havana. That is how I ended up coming to Canada. See they are connected to the immigration officers at the airport in Moscow, so you just pay them, buy your ticket and they put you in the plane that is it. Then, they tell you when you are in Gandor tell them that you are a refugee that is it.

Seeking entrance to Canada through the Gandor line is not only a matter of being in Russia. Others use the same line from the Middle East. The idea is that once one refugee ends up using that line successfully, he or she will relay that information to others, and these will also tell others.

One respondent used the same Gandor line from Jordan. As he puts it.

> ..I got a Cuban visa from Egypt and I went Jordan. I stayed there for about two months. There was this guy at this travel agency in Damascus who arranges and puts you to flights to Cuba that go through Gandor. You give him two hundred dollars and that is it, you are on. I took a Jordanian Airline, we stopped in Cyprus for about four hours, this was June of 1990. I took Aeroflot from there all the way to Russia. I stayed in Moscow overnight. The next morning about 12:00pm, I left Russia with Cuban Airways in route to Havana. See my transit was in Gandor, so after I reached Gandor, Newfoundland I defected there. See I knew what to do, I heard this from some guys, we talk you knew, you get information that way.

This kind of information sharing and networking is not confined to Somalis alone. It is a phenomenon that is more and more becoming a common strategy for refugees who seek safe heaven. For example, Gilad shows how refugees from Iran, Cuba, and Central America use similar strategies to claim refugee status in Canada. She specifically discusses how these refugees use Gandor to defect to Canada which is a route she refers to as *The Northern Route*, she writes:

> Refugee claimants know that the plane must refuel. Before choosing flights for work or holidays, they try to ensure that they are on flights which will refuel in Gandor..." (1996:143)

Traditionally, refugee experiences were seen as conforming to predictable stages from their initial flight to their resettlement in a third country. Moreover, western countries could select those that they found to be fit to be given permanent settlement in their countries (Edelman, 1988). However, as I have shown, modern refugees do not simply go to refugee camps and wait for western countries and other international organizations to come and give them permanent resettlement in their countries. Rather, they creatively construct their own routes. They figure out through their own networks how to get to western refugee-

receiving countries. Smugglers flourish both in countries that are adjacent to refugee producing countries or are sources of refugee claimants. Others, especially, the young, male, innovative, and more educated, spontaneously show up at the doors of countries like Canada (Edelman, 1988, Gilad, 1996). The Somali experience also shows that the majority of the respondents arrived at Canadian airports and borders spontaneously without going through refugee camps in Africa. Thus, one of the main conclusions of this study is that the nature and the behavior of modern refugees are different from what we understood about refugees several decades ago. This new phenomenon has also created problems for the process of refugee determination in Canada and in many other western countries, something that I will turn to now.

Refugee Determination Process in Canada

Determining who is and who is not a refugee is a very complex situation. The Canadian definition of the refugee is taken from the 1951 United Nation's definition (see chapter four). In practice, the refugee must establish this claim by an objectively identifiable criterion that he or she was persecuted. In situations where people come from a generalized warfare however, providing evidence of physical persecution is very difficult. Lisa Gilad writes:

> The typical kind of a person is someone who has owned a shop in Lebanon, for example, but the random violence, the killing, the uncertainty is so oppressive that he fled. Perhaps a relative of his was killed on the street while shopping for groceries. Perhaps he is someone who tried very hard not to become involved in and belief that his children may not survive the bloodshed. May be he saw the inevitability of his children being given a gun and being killed. This person would not meet the definition of refugee but his claim certainly can not be regarded as abusive or manifestly unfounded (1996:127).

The Somali refugees come from similar generalized warfare situations where it is difficult to determine refugee status on the quantifiable criterion of persecution. This

situation is also made more complicated by the fact that a large number of the actual refugees remain inside the country because they did not have the opportunity or the means to seek refugee status outside. In chapter four, I discussed the social stratification of the Somali society. This social stratification is also reflected in who was able to leave and who was not. This stratification becomes very marked especially among the so-called Jarer people, who are somewhat physically distinct from the rest. Even though they have experienced the most severe casualties of the civil war, they were not able to move and seek refugee status abroad. The Midgans and other outcast groups who also suffered silent casualties were not able to leave and seek safe heaven either . These two groups, as I have mentioned earlier, are generally considered as being outside the Somali clan lineage system, and accordingly are discriminated against in all aspects of life.

This stratification is also evident among those who fall within the so-called Somali clan lineage system. The stratification at this level falls along the lines of what I earlier called the symbolic stratification, which at times takes the form of implicit hierarchies. Within this group, there are the more powerful and the less powerful clans. Generally the clans associated with the Siyadd Barre regime and now those that are from same clans as the most powerful warlords were the ones able to migrate to Canada. Of course, it must be noted that a large number of the Somali refugees left Somali prior to the civil war and were thus able to leave the country because they were educated or came from educated families. There are also other clans, despite the fact that they fall within the clan lineage system, that were not able to migrate and seek refuge outside. These groups speak a different language and have always been the only opposition party before the Barre revolution based on distinct cultural identity. They have also experienced some of the most severe casualties in the civil war. In fact, it was due to the famine that they were subjected to by some the warlords that initiated the 1992-1995 international intervention led by the United States forces. Ironically, though, very few of them were able to seek refugee status abroad.

Generally, though, aside from the so-called Jarer group, it is very difficult to distinguish individuals from different clans. This situation has actually created what I refer heretofore as the dilemma of the clan-based Canadian refugee determination process. Once the Somali refugees started to arrive in Canada, the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board started to inform themselves about the clan structure of the Somalis based on various anthropological works about the Somali clan system. This literature generally assumes that the social structure, and therefore the understanding of Somalis, is inextricably tied to their clan system. This idea somewhat artificially allowed the Canadian immigration system to locate individual claimants into particular clans superficially allowing them to figure out which clan has a legitimate fear of persecution. However, individual Somali refugees learned that the Board was beginning to understand their clan system, and so they started to identify themselves, regardless of actual clan membership, as belonging to the clans that the Canadian thought to have some legitimate fears of persecution. What usually happens is that in different periods of the civil war in Somalia, the Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board will somehow decides that the members of some clans have legitimate fears of persecution while others do not. The Somalis on the other hand, especially those who were from the clans that are not considered to have any legitimate fear started to identify the clan that is in favor at that time. For example, during 1988-1990, there were two opportunities available. The first one was to claim that one was against the Siyaad Barre regime. The second opportunity was to claim that one was from the northern region in which case they could increase their probability of being accepted into Canada. Currently, it is advantage to claim one is from the less powerful clans. It must be noted here, though, that this is not something that Somalis have invented single-handedly. It resulted from an elaborate social interaction between Canadian immigration officers, on the one hand, and the Somali refugee claimants, on the other. The center of this interaction process is the Canadian immigration officers trying to determine who was a refugee and who is not based on clan

membership and individual refugees trying situate their claim along those lines. The main question in this interaction process is obviously clan membership determination. However, before I go into the details of the problems of the clan-based determination process, let me show what generally happens in the process. As one respondent puts:

> Yeah because when you go through the hearing process, they have family trees and tribal genealogies and they ask you what is your tribe, you say my tribe is this one or that one, then they start picking it from the genealogical map. See they have a genealogical tree with all the tribes and whatever, so whichever you mention the first time they mark it and they go until the last one, it is there, it is there at the immigration office , you will be surprised.

The process of asking which clan one is from sometimes creates an unexpected situation for some Somali refugees, especially those who arrived in the early days of 1991, in that they could not comprehend that Canadian officers knew something about the Somali clan system. As this respondent points out: "I never thought that a Canadian immigration officer will ask me about my tribe, or will know about Somali clans. It was very interesting and very surprising at the same time, it really was."
Another respondent put her surprise in this way:

> When they asked me about my clan I never thought that the Canadian immigration Officers will know anything about Somali Clans. This was very interesting because when they sent me back to *La Casa* refugee house in Buffalo, the social workers there showed a dictionary that has all the names of the Somali clans and how they are structured, I thought what an interesting thing, it is the same thing that I ran away from that is still here.

Why do Canadian immigration officers ask individual refugee claimants about their clans? The answer is simply that they are trying to determine who is a refugee and who is not. The Somali refugee claimants also understand that. As the following respondent points out:

> Because it is reasonable, because they want to define the person who is the victim,

> That is what I thought later.

Another respondent said:

> Yeah, what they consider is whether or not one is from the ruling clan, whether or not they to Siyaad Barre's clan, and so therefore verify that one did not come from a privileged clan in Somalia.

However, the main question is can they determine who is from what clan given the nature of the Somali society? Basically it is very difficult to determine membership with precision, even among Somalis themselves. In other words, even Somalis themselves can not determine who is from what clan based on appearance, which means they have to accept what that person says. As the following respondent points out:

> Yeah, they wouldn't be able to figure you out, they can't. I can claim any clan I desire, I can claim or say any tribe I want at any time, if I know the chain of that clan. If I say my clan is so and so from the south and I know what the clan goes by, they will never, never know who I am, they will never know who I am. But sometimes what they do is, they have translators who are sworn to check if someone is claiming a clan that is not theirs. The translator from the refugee Board or the Immigration Board will determine that apart from how you talk your Somali because you have the same, same, language and you talk the same but the dialect is little different from the north and the south, east or whatever. But other than that, they can't tell who is claiming what or what not.

Another respondent says:

> Any way when I told them about my clan, they could not tell whether I was from that tribe or not, you know. They can not distinguish those from one clan from those of the other clan by just asking what clan are you from. They can not tell whether that is your clan or not.

Another respondent also agrees that the Canadian immigration officers can not tell who is from what clan. as he puts it:

> The Somali person knows the structures of the Somali clan system, their customs, their dialects. I mean it is very easy for me to say that I am from such and such clan, and such and such sub-clan, my clan chief is so and so, you know. Usually, people from clan X know the structure of other clans and how they are related to each other. It is very easy for the Somali to learn also about the structure of any particular clan. Based on that, I would say it is very difficult, if not impossible for

an immigration officer to figure out the clan identity of a Somali individual.

The preceding discussion does not necessarily suggest that those who claim fictive clan membership are not actually refugees. From in order to receive a favorable determination are not refugees. The process of refugee determination, at least among those who come from a generalized warfare situations, must not be tied to individual based determination. Rather, the process of refugee determination must be seen from an structural perspective. That is, it must be tied to the possibility of return given the generalized civil war situation of the country. If the country of origin is generally recognized as unsafe, as is the case in Somalia, then one is at risk regardless of whether one is seen as being eligible for refugee status or not. This is even more so because, if the Canadian government can not return those they see as not refugees, then what is the use of that determination. The violence in Somalia may continue in the foreseeable future. For example, the fourteen-year-old child who came to Canada with his or her parents in 1990 has graduated from high school and can not to college because he or she is not eligible to get government assistance to attend college. Thus, the best and the most humanistic way to determine refugee eligibility is to base the determination on the possibility of return migration, something that I will return to now.

The Dynamics of Return Migration

In the preceding section, I have discussed some of the problems inherent in the refugee determination process, which are essentially tied to the problems of defining who is a refugee and who is not. I have made the point that the traditional definition of the refugee type is no longer empirically valid, at least as it relates to the behavior of modern refugees in that their migration processes are somewhat different from the traditional stage-tied migration routes. That is, modern refugees do not conform to flight, camp, and resettlement in a third country process.

This section discusses the dynamics of return migration by looking into the

difference between intention to return and the actualization of that intention. This conceptualization is very important in that, unlike the literature which ties refugee immigrant distinction on the assumption that refugees tend to entertain feelings of return while refugees do not, the current research shows that such modes of deductive thinking is not valid because it does not take into account the distinctions between intentions and actualization.

As I have shown in Table 6, the largest majority (60%) of the Somali refugees entertain strong feelings of returning to Somalia. Based on that figure, one can reach the conclusion that Somalis as refugees conform to the generalized assumption that refugees entertain strong feelings of return. This could be true, except in that it fails to grasp the fundamental analytical difference between intentions and the actualization of that behavior. The actualization of that behavior is necessarily accentuated by the particular situation at hand. These situations can be either tied to the environment in the original homeland, the host environment, or a mixture of the two. These situations create a state in which the individual refugee may entertain some feelings or intentions to return, but may never be able to do that.

The following respondent captures the contradiction between intentions and their actualization,

> I am planning a long trip home. After seven years I don't know how things will be, but I am sure there will be a big difference, even though now, I don't know what the difference will be. Since the time I left Somalia, you know, I hear that the country has been destroyed, but never to the extent that I hear or saw on television. I know for a fact that my personal belongings, the house where I have grown up has been destroyed, and it is down to the ground. There is nothing called my old house now and that really scares me and I don't know what will happen. At any rate, I just want to see my mother, after seven years, it is a personal visit. Of course, I have all my stuff here, my car and everything. I don't know, since the situation is unstable, I can't say anything about going back permanently or not, no body can say anything about that. The idea of going back really scares me and this is what I have been telling you, it really scares me. Because the schools I used to go are destroyed as well as my house. I don't remember any one there, no friends, no neighbors, my father died, so it is

> very, very scary. See I don't know, I can not tell you also who I am protecting myself from, and all I know is that I have to see my mother after seven years, no matter what it takes, I have to see her. The problem is that she doesn't want leave home. She loves the place and she doesn't like the cold weather, she doesn't like to come here, or anywhere else. I have a sister in Italy, another sister in the United Kingdom, she doesn't like anywhere else, she likes the place where she grow up that is it.

Apparently there are multitudes of situations involving both the host and home environment that impede the actualization of return migration. Moreover, after visiting Somalia, this respondent may experience what Strauss referred to as "turning points". Turning points, according to Strauss, produce identity transformations. For example, before visiting, the individual has what I refer to here as return identity. However, after visiting, the individual may encounter a totally different environment than the one that he or she had known prior to their flight. This anticipated contradiction is clear from the narrative of the respondent. The respondent left Somalia in 1989, just one year before the civil war. At that time, as it is clear from the narrative, the country did not as yet experience the destruction that it sustained the seven years since the respondent was away. In such turning points, it might even be likely that the ideas of home and host environments may be collapsed in that due to the lack of friends and the transformation of one's initially known environment into an alien one coupled with the creation of a cultural enclave in the host country may render the host country to become the actual home of the individual.

Another respondent also suggests similar hesitations regarding return migration generated both by the home environment and the host country.

> Well, it is the though of being here in this country over the next twenty years. The way the system is, the way it is built, it is the thought of becoming a senior and helpless in this country, there is no one out here for you. Your children will grow up, they will move out. The country is too big, the country is too big. They can move to another state or whatever, and you will be left alone, but back home you have every one around, your brother, your sisters, your cousins and every one else, and you are never alone that is the thing which makes me really feel to go

> back home. Back home there are things that you can manage, things like the ability to get a maid, you can get a housekeeper, a helper, or a relative to come and even check with all the time. But in this country, if you are put in a nursing home, it is like the end of your life.

The complexities of the situations that are involved in the contradiction between intentions and actualization can also be seen from the narrative of the following respondent.

> Well that is what occupies my mind right now and all the time. If Allah brings peace in Somalia, I will go back if I am alive, it is a must. Wallahi after one year, well reality it depends on me, how ready I am. Because I just came here now, I have some objectives and aspirations, may be I want to study, or I want to work for a while, but if I reach my objectives after one year and there is peace in Somalia I will go that is it. If it takes two years it is two years, if it takes three years it is three years, until I reach my aim, once I reach that aim I will go back, if I am alive.

The interaction between the respondent and myself also shows how complex the process of return migration is. As it is clear from this simple interaction:

> I: Do you think that you will ever go back to Somalia?
> R: It is possible, but not now.
> I: Why?
> R: The current turmoil.
> I: But if there was no problem, would you return?
> R: That will take a long time, depends on my expectations, and the things that I want to achieve.

Issues of return migration also involve more intimate and other cultural aspects of the society. As the following respondent puts it:

> Well I have to finish school, find a job and get married, but also as a women I can't tell what will happen, I know I am going to have a family. So, the leader of the house is the man. If his house and interests are in North America that is where I will stay. If he wants to go back to Somalia that is where I will go. I have some friends now who got married in Canada and went back to Somalia.

Still another respondent says:

> Yeah I will. well, I don't know really, I would definitely go back one day,

> but I don't now when. Because I would like to change the lives of our people and since I am a medical doctor plus some of the experience that I got from Canada now, I think I can help a lot of Somalis, I am of course helping Somalis now, but I can help more there. To settle Somalia, I don't know. But I will go one day, and that will depend also on the political situation in Somalia, and no body knows much about that. To tell you the truth, I don't have an exact answer now, but I am sure that I will go one day.

Others can not actualize return migration due to situations tied to the home country. As the following respondent points out:

> There is no question that I will go back to Somalia, for the next, in fact it depends. I can not say few years, but when a democratic government comes into existence in Somalia, and there is peace, I will be the first person to go. I will take my children with me. I will never leave children alone in this country.

Another respondent says:

> I: Do you think you will ever go back to Somalia?
> R: I would have loved to go back to Somalia if it is safe. I am a very fearful person, my father and mother are even more fearful, they left Somalia and never went back since. See we are not politicians, my parents are not politicians and the problem in Somalia is politics. If the political problems are solved, then I would love to go back. The problem is, though, that Canada doesn't seem to offer any better life either. Maybe if I finish University here and find a good job, you know, or I get married and my husband is working, then maybe I will stay. But, to say that I am going to finish University here, and that I am going to stay in Canada and work, I don't know about that either. In my mind, I think I will not get a good job here, because even the whites do not have jobs here, maybe after the recession, I might change my mind. I am thinking, you have your *Sharci*, then why all the problem, go to Arabia I am thinking to myself. I will grab the first opportunity that I find in Arabia.

Others do not experience any contradiction between intentions and actualization in that they sure that they don't want to go back. As the following respondent puts it:

> I don't think I can because I wouldn't be safe. If I can go back I would have never left and came here in the first place. Going back to Somalia is

> like going to my death. If I want to be buried immediately I will go to Somalia, but no, I am not ready to do that, so thanks to the Canadian government, they gave us shelter and I don't bother about my landing , one day I will get it. I only have certain limits now like I can't go to college or something like that, but every thing else is O.K.

Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the process migration through the experience of the Somali community in Toronto. The process of migration was analyzed both in terms exit modes and the experiences and encounters that individuals face while they are between Canada and Somalia, as well as the strategies that they use in order to reach a desired final destination. Specifically, the process of migration was analyzed of the following categories: the motives for migration, migration chains and routes, migration networks, return migration, and the process of refuge determination. Thus, the main conclusion of this dissertation, given the data, and in consideration of the issues discussed above is that migration must be seen as a social process that simultaneously collapses body migration with identity migrations. In other words, migrating individuals carry their bodies, as well as their identities during the process in such a way the two aspect can not be separated from each other. I will discuss these issues further in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS III: IDENTITY CHALLENGES AND TRANSFORMATION

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the process of identity challenges and transformations involved in Somali migration to Toronto. The main contention of this chapter is that the process of migration intrinsically involves identity challenges and transformations. The main question raised here is how do people from societies that do not employ racial categories in their everyday interaction deal with identity forms and challenges encountered in a racially categorized society. This assertion is at once simple and complex. Simple, in the sense that, if one assumes that racial and identity categories are derivable from pre-determined physical and cultural characteristics, then one would conclude that immigrants will identify with groups already in the host countries who are somewhat physically and culturally similar to them and thus automatically fit into the overall racial and identity structures of the host society. In other words, such line of thinking will assume that, for example, Asian immigrants will assume identity categories already established by other Asian communities in the host country. Similar identification processes can also be assumed about African immigrants joining Canadian society. However, this process becomes very complex when we recognize both the historical and cultural, not to mention the situational and interactional basis of racial and identity processes. The historical and situational basis of racial and identity formation provides the opportunity to investigate the kind of racial and identity categories employed by the immigrants group in their homelands. This process can then be compared to the racial and identity categories used in the host environment so as to provide a historically and situationally contextualized understanding of the process by which identities are created and negotiated. The specific questions that this dissertation raises are: "What kind of identification categories do Somalis use in their own environment?" and "How do they

perceive identity categories assigned to them by the racial and social structures of the Canadian society?"

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the pre-migration Somali social identities. In this section, I will examine whether Somalis in their homeland environment employ racialized identity categories in their everyday lives. The second part of the chapter deals with the radicalized identity categories that Somali refugees encounter once they reach Canada. Here, individuals may encounter new situations, which may call for adjustment of self, and identity, which can further lead to situational identity formations. This section takes its impetus from Stryker's concept of identity salience in that individuals may engage in a process of identity change and continuities in terms of their salience of the situations encountered. The process of identity salience may be influenced by the values attached to identities in the host environment and whether those values match those of the host environment. Individuals in such situations may reject identities assigned to them by the host community and engage in a process of counter devaluation. Given this possibility, the last section will examine the process of identity values and enactment. This section will focus on the perceptions of Somalis in terms of how they perceive they are perceived by the majority, how they perceives themselves, and how Somalis themselves perceive the majority. In other words, I will asses the process of identity devaluation and counter devaluation based on the perceptions of the Somali community in Toronto. The idea of identity devaluation and counter devaluation will be tied to what Goffman referred to as stigma and identity devaluation. The main difference between Goffman's analysis and the present study is that while Goffman assessed the process of stigma and identity devaluation from the perspective of the majority, I use the perception of the minority in understanding the same process. Also while Goffman's conceptualization of stigma is based on individuals, the present study deals with group stigma (Blumer, 1997).

Identity Categories in Somalia

Generally, Somalis regard their identity as anatural, unconstructed category that is lodged in the belief that they are descended from a single ancestor. This belief leads to the assertion by the Somali people that they are of both biologically and culturally one ethnic group. Thus, Somaliness entails a collective self-conception of culture consisting of one language, one religion, and similar physical characteristics. However, sometimes it becomes very difficult to objectively define what a Somali is without references to other identities. Moreover, the Somali identity is sometimes defined as nationality, as the following respondent suggests:

> I: What did you consider yourself ethnically, when you were in Somalia?
> R: I considered myself a Somali.
> I: What is Somali?
> R: Well, a Somali, like there is Chinese, Indian, or even the whites have different types, they don't all look alike, maybe we think that they look alike, but they don't. So, I consider myself a Somali, I did not consider myself as black, white, Chinese, or Indian, I considered myself as Somali and only Somali, that was my race.

What is apparent from the above response is that the respondent strictly considers herself as Somali, but objectively defining what is Somali without references to some other subjectively defined identity seems fruitless. She further defines Somaliness as a racial identity of its own that is distinct from other conventionally understood racial categories. The discussion here confirms the idea that identities in general are oppositionally constructed. What is more interesting about the above response is that the Somali identity is not conceived in terms of either black or white, as the respondent forcefully points out she is neither black, white, Indian, nor Chinese. In other words, Somali is a race of its own that can not be understood in terms of the Western racial categories that are currently available to us. The Somali identity as a race of its own at times carries its own perceived pride and ethnocentrism. The following respondent suggests this element:

> I: What did you consider yourself ethnically when you were in Somalia?
> R: In Somalia, we used to consider ourselves as beautiful people, who are the best people in the world. There is no one better than us.

Sometimes the Somali identity is constructed through its merger of other more global identities, which can provide an affinity with other groups that are seen as similar. This process, especially when it involves Islam, allows identity holders to remove themselves from racial categorizations. The following respondent suggests this process:

> R: Well this whole thing must be perceived in terms of the larger family based on the Muslim point of view. In other words, all Muslims are brothers and all Muslims are sisters. It is a phenomenon that has been emphasized in my upbringing. It is a tenet that I grew up with. Again, I grew up in a Somali community that holds to that tenet.
> I: Did you grow up as a Somalia or as a Muslim?
> R: both.
> I: But, which identity came first?
> R: You see my point, the point that I stress is that Muslims, as I said, are very extricably related people in terms of ideological and cultural phenomenon and the perception is that every Muslim family is your family, and that, you know, if you are conversant with the teaching of Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him, and the Sunna, they are described as brothers and sisters and therefore, when you look at it, it is a bigger, a larger umbrella to the Somali identity. The concept Somali is blood relations in my view, but Islam provides an ideological and cultural relationships whereas Islamic point, I mean, Somali point of view is, is one of biological.
> I: did you have that conception of things before you came here?
> R: Yeah.
> I: So you consider yourself Muslim first and then Somali?
> R: Yeah, I would say yes.

And the Somali identity is sometimes regarded as simply a combination of Muslim, African and Somali, as the following respondent suggests:

> I: How do you define Somalis?
> R: Well, they are Muslims, Black from East Africa, especially Somalia period.

Beyond these variations, though, the majority of the respondents consider themselves as Somali. This Somali identity, as I have mentioned earlier, can not be understood in terms of racial categories. For them, every body is Somali in that due to the assumed simple idea that every one prescribes to the same culture. Moreover, the idea of different racial

categories, or ethnicity and ethnic differences for that matter does not exist. As the following respondent explains:

> I: What did you consider yourself ethnically in Somalia?
> R: I consider myself Somalia and it never came as an issues, because we were all Somalis, spoke the same language, religion, culture, so there was not any issue of ethnicity at that time.

Thus, as I have shown in the preceding data, Somalis know who they are, or least they perceive they know who they are in terms of their identity. This is so because they are in their own natural environment that contains these identities in an uncontested manner. They perceive their identities in terms of what they refer to as Somalinimo that can not be understood in terms of color or racial categories. Somalis are just Somalis and their identity is neither black, white, or Asian, or African, at least when they are in Somalia. In other words, blackness is merely a condition of existence in Somalia and as such does not have any relevance to everyday roles and interactions. Moreover, racialized or ethnicized identity categories do provide accepted social categories. In other words, racialized and ethnicized identity categories are not part of the social awareness context (Glaser and Strauss, 1964).

This process is shown in table 7 below. The category of "aware" refers to the full understanding of the existence and significance of racial, religious, and ethnic identity categories and differentiation. "Somewhat aware" refers to symbolic awareness in that even though they are aware of the existence of racialized identities, it does again figure in their everyday experiences and interactions. Finally, the category "not aware" refers to a full understanding of the significance of racialized identities including its social significance.

Table 9
Pre-migration Identity Awareness*

Categories	Frequencies	%
Aware	3	10
Somewhat aware	8	27
Not aware	17	57
No response	2	7
Total	30	100

* Based on the question " Have you ever thought about racial or religious identity differentiation in Somalia?"

As it is clear from table 9, the majority (57%) of the Somalis respondents were not aware or did not experience racialized or religion based identity categories. As the following respondent explains:

> I: In Somalia, did you ever think about issues related to race, ethnicity, or color?
> R: No, I did not, well, first let me say one thing. I left Somalia, when I was still young, well I was not very young, I was sixteen, so I never thought about some of these things, I was just growing up then, maybe if I stayed longer, I would have had some experiences of that kind, but at that time I was in high school, I was preoccupied with other things and never seriously worried about life and social issues.

Another respondent said the following:

> I: In Somalia did you ever think about issue related to race, ethnicity, or color?
> R: No, it never occurred to me, I never even heard about the problems between blacks and whites. Even when I was in India, I never heard about issues of black and white, or that blacks are the minority people.
> I: What do you think is the reason?
> R: Because we didn't have any body that was white. All of us were 100% of the same religion, color. We never had anybody was superior or inferior in terms of color. But, If I think about ethnicity in terms of tribes, we had that problem, but not color.

Still another responded explains the issues of the awareness of racialized categories as such:

> I: In Somalia, did it ever occur to you that you were black or something like that?
> R: No, when I was back home? No, I never had that problem and I can not tell you any reason why I never thought about that, but all I remember is that people used to be equal, you know, people used to be just the same. I think because I was, you know, around Somalis so that is why you don't hear about differences. That is the only reason I can not recall any moment at all of thinking of being black at that time.

Some of the respondent, roughly 8% show some awareness of the existence of racialized based identity categories, but as we will see later, it is not something that they have experienced in their everyday life experiences or something that has an impact on their own identity. As the following respondent explains:

> I: How about issues of race, have you ever thought about issues of race and racial differences in Somalia?
> R: No, I never thought about issues of race, because we were of the same color, but I can recount one event that happened to me when I was working in the region that I used to work as a medical doctor for this international organization. One day I was working with a white guy who was the administrator and we were discussing about going to a trip. So one of the white guys who was supposed to go with us was very late and I said to the other guy let us go, if he is not ready then he is not ready for the trip. That guy then told me listen, did you hate the white people [laugh, laugh] and I just laughed at him and said what you mean? What you mean? What do you mean you hate or I didn't know that race was an issue at the time. And I said, no he is late, so since if I am late then you have to leave, then if he is late, so if he is late then we have to leave. So the guy did not continue the discussion, because he understood that I didn't know what he was talking about. So as a Somali I never considered race to mean anything.

Another respondent explains his understanding of racialized identity as such:

> I: Have you thought about issues of race in Somalia?
> R: The Somalis for me were not just Somalis, they were also Africans who are black people. I used to hear about the racial problems in South Africa and Rhodesia [now Zimbabwe], but I didn't know anything about the nature of racism in North America, and I never heard the word racism at all. I heard that your color makes some differences in some parts of the world or that some singers singing

about racial issues in America, but I never appreciated what it meant.
I: So you did not consider race to mean anything for you?
R: Absolutely no, I have never thought it was an issue.
I: Why do you think you never thought about it?
R: Well, I think my surroundings, I never heard any, I never talked, or introduced to any one who was different than my race and I think my family was the same.

Another respondent suggest that he was aware of racial issues but puts it in the following way:

I: have you thought about issues of race and color in Somalia?
R: Yeah, in fact this goes back to the Somali culture. I, we are Somalis, no matter which region you came from, you are raised as a Somali. For me the white person used to be English, German, or American. In Somalia, the Indian was an Indian, the Arab was an Arab. And for us we had this big identity which is Somali that is it. But race as such, black and white never occurred to me.

Generally, therefore the idea of race as a category of understanding social reality or as an identity marker that can enter into the every- day activities of the Somali is sometimes not available in their cultural narrative resources (Holstein and Gubruim, 1995). As the hesitation of the following interaction shows:

I: How about issues of race?
R: back home?
I: Yeah.
R: Hesitation.
I: Remember, in Canada, we think in terms of black and white.
R: Right, right, here yes, but there no, no, I never, never, never heard of that word before I came to this country, never, race, I have never heard of that word before actually before I came here, that is the time when heard about it.
I: What do you think is the reason why you never heard about race before you came to Canada?
R: I think because people are brought up to respect each other's culture, and whatever.

Similarly, religion-based identities do not invoke differentiated identity in Somalia and as such also serve as a non-salient identity marker. As the following respondent explains:

I: In Somalia, have you ever thought about issues of religion such as Christianity or Islam?
R: No because, I came from a Muslim society and I was pure Muslim, there was no way that I could have thought about issues of Christianity or anything like that, I was Muslim and every one

else was too, that is all.

Another respondent says:

> I: In Somalia, have you thought about issues of religion such as Christianity or Islam?
> R: *Wallahi*, no. At that time, I didn't think about the idea that this is Muslim, or this is *Gaal* because every body was Muslim, especially me, I believed that every person in Somalia was Muslim. I heard sometimes some people say that some of the Christian missions in Somalia where converting people into Christianity specially this tribe that is called [...] whom these organizations built houses for and things like that, but I never believed it, really. I haven't seen it myself either, because you can only believe when you see, I haven't seen any Somali Christian going to the Church and praying I haven't seen that. Even the help the missionaries give may be for humanitarian reasons, who knows, but I haven't seen it myself.

Another respondent suggests the following in terms of his understanding about the relevance of other religions other than Islam in his thinking. As he puts it:

> I: O.K., O.K., when you were in Somalia, have you thought about issues of religion such as Christianity or Islam?
> R: No, although I used to work with a Christian agency such as the Swedish Church Relief and World Vision, that issue never came to my mind even though I knew that they were talking about religion at the time, but I, believe that I am Muslim, and it was not an issues for me.
> R: Why do you think that, even other Somalis, or yourself never thought about issues of religion?
> R: Because the dominant religion in the country was Islam, so we see that Islam is the only religion that existed in the country and we didn't have any idea about other religions.

Some respondents were aware of the existence of Christianity in some quarters of Somalia, especially in some of the larger cities. As the following respondent points out:

> I: In Somalia, have you ever thought about issues of religion such as Christianity and Islam?
> R: No, even though I went to a missionary school, our house was a very religious house. It was not like, be careful about Christianity, because Islam was the overriding religion in the country and

still is.

Another respondent had a first-hand experience of learning about Christianity, but nevertheless points that she was not aware of the possibility of religion as a differentiating identity category. As her response suggests:

> R: Yeah, there are too many different things that I can not remember in my life, but in my primary school up to the intermediate school, I grew up in an environment with a lot of Christians. I grew up with a lot of nuns, I grew up with these nuns and I have been in their school up to the, I think up to the age of age of, well I don't remember exactly, but all I know is that I grew up with the nuns and you know a lot of different people more or less Italians...
> I: How did you end up in this Catholic school?
> R: That was my father's idea to take me to that school, because it was a private school, not just me, but also my brothers and sisters went to that school too. See my father used to work for the Italians, and so he was close to them.
> I: Is that something that a lot of Somalis did at the time?
> R: Well, at that time very few people did that, not every body could do that because it was very expensive. My father could afford it, not just me, but also my siblings...
> I: During this time, were you exposed to Christianity?
> R: Of course yes, especially Catholicism. I remember at eight years of age, we used to pray. It wasn't necessary to pray, but we liked to go, because it was there.
> I: Great, so, In Somalia have you ever thought about issues of religion such as Islam and Christianity?
> R: Well, when you are in Somalia, there was no problem, there was no comparison, there was nothing that makes you think in that way until you come into a culture where every thing is there and you are categorized into exactly where you belong to. But back home, we used to go around, we used to be free and I believe at that time I wasn't mature enough to categorize myself in some ways or places. I think that was the reason.

As the narrative clearly points out, despite the fact that this respondent was very familiar with other religions, the mere knowledge of other religions did not give the sense that religion is in some ways used as a category of ethnic identity or social differentiation. This discussion indicates that identities are socially and situationally constructed only in

response the existence of other identity categories. When individuals can not compare their identity categories with another identities that are different somewhat, even their own identity is not an identity per se. That is, Somalis in their own environment, take Islam to be uncontested, and a taken-for-granted identity. As the following respondents also points out:

> I: O.K., I think we can start. In Somalia, did you ever think about issues of religion such as Christianity and Islam?
> R: I think I have taken Islam to be most precise and most chosen religion for me and also for others. I always thought Islam was *the, the only religion.*
> I: What does that mean? Does it mean that you never thought about other religions?
> R: I thought about Christianity, but always in opposition to Islam, and have been in an Islamic country, and being Muslim, I have always taken-for-granted that Islam was *the* right religion for humanity, and that is it.

Despite these variations, as I have mentioned earlier, the large majority of the respondents regard themselves as Somalis without racial categories attached to it. In other words, Somalis who have migrated to Canada also carry their identity as "just Somali" with them. I have asked the question in table 8 in order to assess the declared identity among Somalis after migrating to Canada.

Table 10
Preferred Identity in Canada*

Category	Frequency	%
Somali	23	76.7
Canadian/Somali	3	10.0
No Response	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

*Responses to the question "What do you consider yourself in Canada?"

As it is clear from table 10, the largest majority (76%) of the respondents selected

Somali to be their preferred identity while in Canada. Another 10% selected Somali-Canadian to be their preferred identity. The reason why the majority of Somalis insist on being just Somali may have something to do with their perception that accepting ethnic minority status such as refugee, immigrant, and minority, as Hein (1994:283) put it, "connotes social and/or political inequality because of the group's inferior status in a racial or ethnic hierarchy." For example, in his study among the Hmong in the United States, Hein, suggests that the process of moving from a previous identity to ethnic minority may result from a learning process. This learning process is mediated by the accumulation of discriminatory experiences of the immigrants which makes individual immigrants changed their identity world view in an instrumental fashion (Portes, 1984, Hein, 1994). The results of the present study does not corroborate the findings of Hein, mainly, maybe, due to the fact that Somalis in Canada are very recent group and that they did not accumulate any experiences of discrimination.

At any rate, the preceding data indicates the majority of the respondents are not aware of racialized identity categories. In other words, they do not perceive themselves in terms of black and white. The idea of being black itself does not provide a category for understanding social reality. Furthermore the data supports what Paden (1967, quoted in Waters, 1990) referred to as situational Identity suggesting that particular social contexts and structures affect whether individuals invoke one identity or another. That is, in the Somali social context, there are no contexts or structures that can affect one to invoke racialized or religious based identities.

Encountering Racialized Identity Categories

However, despite this insistence of unracialized identity among the Somalis, once they arrive in Canada, they start to realize that the Canadian society is racially and ethnically categorized. The process of becoming aware and being confronted with racialized identity categories creates some problems among the respondents. As the

following respondent points out:

> R: But when I was growing up, I didn't see like being told even by my mum, the issues of not to play with these kid or that kid, or you should go here and not go there, so I think when in this society that I am in now, you see kids are not playing with certain kids, they are not going out with certain kids, and they think it is just a matter of everyday thing looks very strange to me. See, it is not them not knowing, it is just a matter of this systematical thing, it is a chain of this system itself. People may not consciously decide to do so, but the system itself structures the society. But back home, it was nothing like, the system does not create such situations. It is just an open thing where people can come and do things together and leave, no problem.

Another respondent points out:

> R: Well, that is a very interesting question because, I really, I have learned what racism is in this society. I did not know about it. That could be my own experience, but I mean I only thought about it what the idea of color differences is, only when I came to this society.

Another respondent explains her experience in this way:

> When I am talking about race the main issue of being black came to my mind when I came to Canada, and that lots of people that I work with had this idea of me being black, you know. But I have no problem with being black or what ever as long as the work and as long as we can share the office and work together and every thing, I never had any problem. See I used to go around and talk to every body whom I felt comfortable talking to, you know, but any way that is the only time I felt different than somebody else. That is because someone else made me think that way.

Still another respondent recounted of how he was confronted with the idea of racial categories as the following:

> I: Well that is fascinating. How about issues of color, for example, in this country, people understand, or relationships in this country, or in the United States are very much tied to or understood in terms of racial categories-black and white an so forth. Have you ever thought about issues like that in Somalia?
> R: Not really, that is one thing that I come to know as I come to north America, that is for sure, I never thought of myself as black. I always thought of myself as

> Somali, and that I have to admit, it is after I came to north America that the very idea of being black occurred to me for the first time, it is not that I have a problem that my skin is darker, but I never thought of myself as black person, never until I saw in here that people thought of themselves and behave as black and up to this day I usually find myself often not thinking of myself as black, only others would, you know remind me or I would see ways that they would suggest.

This awareness suggest that the Somalis start to perceive that they are placed into some kind of identity categories that are somewhat different from what they assigned to themselves in their home environments. Sometimes, the encounter of such racialized identity categories, especially, among ethnic immigrants may create a high level of uneasiness. Above and beyond the general difficulties that immigrants face when they go to new environments, ethnic immigrants worry about acceptance. In other words, the main worry of immigrants in general may be related to the everyday problems, such as settling and finding a job. However, for the ethnically and culturally different individuals, the worries rise one level beyond these every- day worries. In that, the person may worry about how he or she will be accepted in these new societies. As the following respondent points out:

> R: Well, since I saw different people, specially whites, then I realized that their point of view, the way they see us, when they say black, now when they say black for example, I feel a little hurt, I understand that it refers to me, but when I was in Somalia, I never saw any one referring to me as black.

Another responds says:

> R: In Somalia, we used to consider ourselves as beautiful people, who are the best people in the world. There is no one better than us, well, I knew I was black because I saw some the white *Gaalo* were coming to the country, but I never entertained the idea that some day someone I will characterize me as black, we were very happy with who we were, the way we looked, we were very happy with that.

Still another respondent explains his anticipation of identity placement as such

> R: In Somalia, really, I never thought about color issues, but since I came

> here, I started to feel that, you know, a lot of strange things, like what they call race here such as if you are working in some place, like the places where they send you to work, also sometimes they let you go when you want to work and bring another white person, things like I saw it I here. Like this place where they fired me directly and hired a white person.

Based on these anticipations and the understanding of the racialized nature of the Canadian society, once the Somali immigrants stay in Canada for sometime they start to engage in a process of self and identity evaluations based on how they are perceived by the majority groups in the host society, and create their own sets of counter evaluations similar to what Cooley (1902) has referred to as the "looking-glass self". According to Cooley, the looking glass self may confirm expected identities, or at other times produce undesirable identities. In situation where the expected identities are confirmed, then there is no conflict with the self and the identity of the individual, or in his or her interactions with the rest of the society. But when the resulting identity placement is not what is expected, conflict is inevitable. Moreover, these unexpected negative identities begin to raise issues that Goffman has referred to Stigma.

Somali Perceptions of How they are Perceived

In what follows I will examine the elements of what I refer here to as the process of identity devaluation and counter devaluation between the Somali community and the majority white Canadians through the eyes of the Somali respondents. The main discussion relates to how Somalis perceive they are perceived by the majority Canadians, and Somalis in turn perceive Canadians. The data for this discussion is provided in table 9. As it is clear from the table, the majority of the respondents perceive that white Canadians perceive them in terms of devalued identity categories. Another 10% responded that that white Canadians perceive them neither positively nor negatively. In other words, they see white Canadians as being indifferent in terms of their perceptions about Somalis.

Table 11

Responses to the question, "How do you perceive white Canadian perceptions of you"

Category	Frequency	%
Negative	18	60
Positive	--	--
Neutral	10	33.3
No Response	2	6.7
Total	30	100

Thus, generally, the respondents in this study perceive that they are perceived through a stigmatized and/or devalued identity be it cultural or racial. As the following respondent explains:

> I: These are now somewhat different questions dealing ethnicity and race, What do you think is the perception that white Canadians have about Somalis?
> R: Oh, I will say one thing, it is very hard for these immigrants, because all Canada we are immigrants, all of us we are immigrants, the people who must say something are Indians and they don't say much, but the others see these Somali immigrants coming into the country for the last ten years in big chunks really worry them up, because to them when they come close to somebody who is dark skinned is always a problem they think oh, there is a lot of problem coming now into the country. Instead of them educating themselves about these new immigrants coming to the country, they say why are they coming into the country in such a short time in a lot of them coming in and knowing about them and everything because we as Somalis coming to this country we are willing to learn as much about the society as we can, to observe as much because we know, we are the new comers and we have to fit into the system. We have to educate ourselves, we have to go to school, we have to do, you know, make a living for ourselves, so we are willing to do what, but with them, they always stay behind and criticize. The perceptions that they have about Somalis, we are lazy, we don't want work, we don't want to go to school, we want to be a burden to the system, we want to be in the welfare system for the rest, I don't know when which is not true. People who come into this country, the first time anywhere, you have to be in a sort of support to be able to lift yourself into the next stage, we are all been supported we were supported one year, six months, eight months, then you look for a way out. Most of Somalis who are

coming into the country again, they are well educated, they don't expect to stay at home. Even if the job they are looking is not there for them, maybe they will take another channel, maybe change their career and do something else, but they are not jut there sitting. But for the Canadians, the Canadian, the so-called white Canadians, they think Somalis are just lazy, they don't want to work period.
R: Did that answer your question?
I: Yeah, Yeah....
R: They really look down on people from Africa, they think that they are very down, they are very uncivilized, very uncivilized, they have never seen like lights, they have never seen an apartment, they have never seen this, their roads are this. They think that it is the first time that saw a car here or those kinds of things and it is something that we always educate them even my colleagues, they keep on asking me whether people in Africa have buildings
can you believe, yes don't you see these places have everything. It is not a matter of you seeing people as if though hey are from the dark ages.

Another respondent explains her perception this way:

I: What do you think is the perception that majority Canadians have about Somalis?
R: I don't think they see as any different than the rest of the black people, or that we are different from the blacks. Maybe, they see as immigrants who joined their country. Some of the white people my think that they are threatened by us because they may think that we will take their jobs, maybe they think that we have already suffered and ready to work hard and thus take their jobs, but personally, I have nothing to complain about.
I: If they see you as black, what do you think is their perception of the blacks?
R: Well, I am not a white person, but when I watch TV. Like the Jenny Jones show and the like [laugh] they see blacks as dirty who do not want to work. Even if you look at the dictionary and examine the word black, it says dirty, ignorant, all the negative stuff, at the same time, if you look white in the same dictionary, you will see clean, honest, you know. Even the way they describe in the dictionary, you know, instead of them using dirty why not just say black, or color. Well, you know, some dirt is white too, if you want to see it that way.

Another respondent point out:

I: What do you think is the perception that white Canadians have racially

about Somalis?
R: First of all to white Canadians you are black, your skin is colored, your skin is black, regardless of whether you are Sri Lankan, or a Jamaican, or from Somalia, you are lumped together, may I say the word Nigger politely, I mean, there were two times in which the word was said on my face, one time by a police officer any way.
I: can you tell me more about that?
R: Yeah, I was in 1992, I was a full time college student and I was a night watchman as well. So this one Saturday, I remember, what happened was I took my friend's and parked it in front of store in order to get some cigarettes. By the time I was coming back, there was this police who was writing a ticket for me, a no parking ticket. I came out before he even wrote the ticket, and said I am here already. He didn't say anything so I stood by as he was writing the ticket and then he violently teared the ticket off the paper and shoved it on my face while he was just an inch away from face and said take the ticket Nigger and pay it with my own money implying that I was on welfare. And the second occasion was, I think this was later, I mean, right after that I had also someone who called me a Nigger. This was a student of Toronto University who was a student part time cashier at the parking gate. So we had a little argument one time and he tells you know, you Nigger's, you have a problem. I tell him so what, after all you are just a Portuguese, don't forget that you are also a garbage pin, you know I shrugged my shoulders and left.

Other respondents explain their perceptions in terms class differences as well as race. As the following respondent explains:

I: What do you think is the perception that European Canadians have about you as a Somali?
R: I honestly think more in class terms than color, like people I know, are people of my own intellectual milieu, I know what they think of me. What they think of me is based on what they think I know about, like if the conversation is about Headgear, then the impression of me will be my grasp of Headgear, so I never, I don't have an idea, like there are people of a European stock that I don't worry about what they think of me, they are uneducated, lowly educated, so I think more about class, or different milieu than I think about color, I never think about color as such. Most of my friends are in fact European for one. Second, you know, Second is that there are people of my own intellectual circles. So this people I think most of them have a good image of me. some of them think that I am bossy, and you know, over-powering, I don't listen, I just dominate discussions, I know and I have those qualities. Most of the people I know are intellectuals.
I: How about the lower class?
R: I don't bother with them?
I: But what do you think they think of you?

R: Oh, I don't know, but I know what I think of them. I think of them as just lower class. But I never worried about what they think of me. But I know for sure certain upper middle class are prejudice, and they hide their prejudice, and they don't like when people like me are with them, who can elaborate or show that they are prejudice, and there is certain element of dislike, but that is all right. Many of them are also very good people, but racism comes even in that milieu, and it shows. Sometimes they think, you know, or they forget that you are black and you can still see them speaking, you know, in a negative way about black people, they forget, they think that you are one of them. But in that way, I can see that what they think of me, it is not that I am black, they think I am scholar. But I also have to reflect on that, because I also have some prejudice about lower class whites, they love football, they wear runners, they eat hamburgers, you know what I mean, I have also certain stereotypes. So in that way, like, I have my stereotypes, probably they some about me too and would be immigrants, or black. One of the common things that they always ask me about is how come you speak good English, how come I am interested in philosophy, you know, these things.

Others still explain these perception in terms of refugee status. As this respondent point out:

R: O.K., first, before the Somali civil war, Canadians didn't know much about Somalis, or who they are, so the majority of Canadians are good people even though there are some extremists who do not want anybody to migrate to their country, and believe that they will take their jobs. The majority of those are who refuse to accept refugees are the less educated who are tied to the low paying jobs. So they think they will loose their jobs since they don't have any education to get white color jobs, or management jobs. The largest majority of the refugees who came here, even if you had a degree in Somalia, here you have to do the lower jobs, because they ask you do you have Ontario experience, or Canadian experience. So because of these problems, you have to forget your prior education and degrees and start from basic jobs and low class jobs. These jobs are usually done by the less educated people, maybe we may create problems for these people.
I: Well, if you look at this from a racial or ethnic angle, how do you see Canadians perceive Somalis?
R: Well, if it is what is said on the news, or the reality, I myself, I have no experience in terms of jobs in terms of management positions, but the lower jobs, I haven't seen any discrimination, or that we are seen as inferior, or looked down upon, or something, no I haven't seen that. but a lot of people who came before us, who are black or Africans, the most things that I hear from blacks, those who came before us, who faced some problem in 1970's or the 1960's who did not have any rights in this country, but as Africans, the majority are people are who came after the 1980's. By that time, governments have pressured organizations to reduce discrimination, so I haven't seen any discrimination in the public, maybe in the management positions, they may exist even now. suppose, if you have a

bachelors degree, in order to compete with a white person who has the same degree, you have to have one degree more than him, but within the lower jobs, I don't know this exists.
I: So you don't perceive issues related to black and white?
R: No, I haven't seen that

Others explain these perceptions in terms of the problems facing all immigrants and refugees as well as racial and religion. As the following respondent explains:

I: What do you think is the perception that white Canadians have about Somalis?
R: The *Gaalo* in this country, well, first they see that these people are immigrants and that they are not born here, so the people that we call *Gaalo* are maybe also immigrants unless we ask them were they came from or they are the people who were born here, but the white people, or even some of the black people see Somalis as people who came here in order to collect welfare only, remain here, not to work, and not do anything for the country. Their thinking maybe wrong, or right, but to me it is wrong.
I: How about racially and ethnically?
R: Well they see that we are black and Muslims, the way we are covered, and how we different from other immigrants who came to this country. Because, the Somalia people are very cohesive community who have their own networks and communications. So they know as now, off course, they see us as black. Number one, they see us as black, and also Muslims, so they don't welcome us very well.
I: How are they against you in terms of blackness?
R: Well, the way they speak and interact with you, the black people who were here before us are no different.
I: What is meant by black?
R: Well, we didn't look like them, we are not white, well in this country, it is not only black, other immigrants from for example, Eastern Europe are also looked down upon. They didn't give them some of the jobs, well remember also that these are whites too and they are a little bit more accepted than us. So there is some kind of stratification. The white people who were born here and stayed some time and those of British descent think that they own the country. So since there are different immigrant groups in this country, I see even people from eastern Europe who see themselves as being seen as less than blacks. So in this country, it is not a place were only blacks are looked down upon, every immigrant group as seen as inferior. However, they see blacks as inferior people, who can not understand anything, and are spoiling their country without contributing anything to it.

Based on the above data, the respondents perceive how they are perceived in several forms. Some of the respondents emphasize racial categories. Some emphasize

refugee and immigrant status, while others emphasize racial and class based perceptions. Each category within the scheme of how respondents perceive they are perceived indicates a certain form of stigma and identity devaluation. The perception, for example, that one is perceived as a refugee may indicate to one the feeling of helplessness, as Dorsh (1981:89) pointed out: "...a victim,... a client in need of assistance." As one of the respondents also suggested, "once Canadians have seen the famine and the horrible things that occurred in the country, they see Somalis as poor, and lacking the intelligence to settle their own conflicts. Also the perception that they are perceived in terms of racial categories as, for example, black-African creates the impression that white Canadians perceive them as lazy and uncivilized.

These perceived perceptions fall into what Goffman referred to as the "tribal stigma of race and religion". In other words, these respondents, at least based on their perception, are encountered with a tribal stigma that renders all of their attributes, be they immigrant, refugee, African, black, or Muslim as somewhat devalued.

The following respondent explains the nature of how the process of stereotyping and devaluation is perceived. He states:

> What do you think is the perception of the majority white Canadians have regarding Somalis?
> R: Well, I don't know about the majority, but what I have experienced and seen is, and I don't want to generalize because there are a lot of good people. But what I have experienced is a lot of intolerance, a lot of intolerance, a lot of rejection like you are not welcome. I am beginning to realize that it has something to do with the identity and label of color, having a different heritage, being from a different race, being black and all the above. So when we come to perceptions, all of these labels are playing part of it. . And there is a lot of intolerance to acceptance based on either one or all of these labels. You can read that from the way that you are portrayed in the media, from the way you are accepted in the general society, from the way you are treated in the streets.
>
> Each label has it connection. Remember I gave you some labels and fortunately or unfortunately, I don't know which one of these labels is behind the view. But what makes things more difficult is that the Somalis are first blacks in Canada that do not speak as opposed to the Caribbean's who used to come to Canada before. They are the first blacks who are not Christians. So it is an African, non-Christian,

> it is an African and Somali. It is an African with a different religion and they are black.
>
> So there are all of these combinations in Canada for the first time. Again it the complexity of each label having its own connotations. On the one hand, we are labeled as Muslims who are sexist people who don't like women, and terrorists at the same time. We are all Mohammed's and no body can deal with these Mohammed's. When you walk into a job interview, before you could say my name is.... that perception is already there. On the top of that you say my name is Mohammed and you have this heavy ascent. Then if you are asked where are you from and you say Somali, and then the perception of warlords is there. So I don't really know, but all these labels each and every one has its own inferiority attached to it, its own inheritance and it is so complex to a point where the perception of the Somali society was not so warm. They are labeled as people who are in fraud, people who are praying in the system, people who are not hear to settle, and that perception has been portrayed in the media and the government. So, yes, a lot of stuff can cook in there.

Given these perceived external placement of devalued identity categories, the majority of the respondents engage in a process of counter identity devaluation targeted towards the majority whom they perceive to have negative evaluations of their identity. The following table shows this process of counter devaluation. The table provides three categories of the perceptions of the Somali respondents regarding the majority groups. The category negative is derived from responses that portray the majority as having devalued identity categories whether cultural and/or religious. This category also includes responses from the respondents who see themselves as superior to the culture of the majority. The category neutral/indifference is based on those responses that somewhat embody non-negative nor positive perceptions towards the majority, or who are in general indifferent altogether. The category positive is derived from responses that assign positive values to the culture of the majority.

Table 12
Somali Perceptions of White Canadians

Category	Frequency	%
Negative	15	50
Positive	3	10
Neutral/indifference	9	30
No Response	3	10
Total	30	100

As it is clear from table 12, half of the respondents in the sample perceive the culture of the majority as not having any positive values. As the following respondent indicates:

> I: so since they perceive you the ways that you have mentioned, how do you perceive them yourself?
> I: Well when it comes to culture, the culture aspect of it I feel they are inferior to me. They are inferior to my culture, when it comes to culture they are inferior. But when it comes to biological phenomenon, I think we are equal.
> I: can you tell more about the culture?
> R: Well, you know, for example I grew up in a Somali community and now I am about 35 years, and I have been here for seven years. I have never heard, I have never seen anything like incest, never, I have never seen anything like lesbian, I have never seen people with false smiles. If you are the enemy you are the enemy, you know, and I know it. So think and I am very happy to say that my culture has prepared me in such a way that I am able to deal with other human being equally on the same basis. So I think their culture is not very good. When it comes to culture, I think that these people do not have any culture. Remember that at the same time, I have a lot of respect for his country, if only they could open up and appreciate other cultures.

Another respondents says:

> I: What kind of perceptions did you have about the white people or *Gaalo*?
> R: At home, we consider them weak, particularly, they can't do a hard work and I remember, although they may have different perceptions also by themselves, but in difficult areas [laugh] we give them the good places so that they may endure for a long period, rather than putting him in the back of the car. So we consider them as, as weak. But I think they have their own perception and we have own.

This respondent also says:

> I: So what do you think of them, given their perception?
> R: Oh, I think of them to be very ignorant, very ignorant, because if somebody is in that position not wanting to know about you, people asking all this funny question, and the only thing is that they are superior and that they have everything. But to my knowledge, most of them are in this system, on welfare and not working. So, to them they feel it is all right to be there but for the new comers it is not O.K. they are very ignorant people, very ignorant.
> I: So do you think they are superior to you?
> R: No, no, no, no they are never, I don't feel , I have never felt like that since I have came to this country. I am a good fighter, but maybe people who have a low self esteem they may think that way, they may feel this people are superior than us, they think these people are here to give them some of their earnings, and assistance and everything, but no, they are entitled to everything until they can make their next move. But I have never, never felt like that, I have never felt like that.
> I: Do you sometimes even think that they are inferior to you as a Somali individual?
> R: Oh, yeah.
> I: Can you tell me more about that?
> R: like if I think they are inferior to me.
> I: Yeah.
> R: I will say sometimes for what they do and how they act and when it reaches a point where they think they are superior, I kind of reverse it on them. I always reverse what the are thinking of me into them, because I think that is not right for one to think of another human being like that. We are all human beings, it doesn't matter of your skin, if you can do it I can do it too. it is not a matter of your color, it is your brain. {Door was knocked}.
> I: Since Canadians Perceive Somalis as such what is your perception of yourself?
> R: Well, I see myself as better than them, who has a better religion, better color, and better culture who came from a good country and are quality people. For example from what I have seen from the *Gaalo* so far, they don't even have family values, so I see them as very inferior to me. Every body is going on their own way. The father is walking on one direction, and the son on the other direction. Every body is only working towards their individual interests, so they don't even have families or any values. Therefore, we are different from them and are very happy that we are not *Gaalo*.

Some of the respondents do not perceive any identity as either more valued or devalued

than any other identity. As the following respondents explains:

> R: No, I don't feel anything, lower or higher than them. They are human being just like me from a father and mother so, some times when they get to know they realize that you are gentle and generous. I used to take a big thermos of coffee because during the break time I couldn't go out. So I used to offer the to who ever wanted, then they started to come me and I stared to take my whole coffee maker to school and also used to offer to the teacher and then she liked my coffee.
> I: How do Somalis perceive white Canadians?
> R: Let me see we are all the children of Allah you know, we are all equal.

Another respondents explains his perception as the following:

> I: As a Somali, what is your perception of white Canadians.
> R: Not different from any other person as long as they are open minded, any white Canadian or any yellow Canadian I have no problem with any one.
> I: So you don't perceive any body in any different way?
> R: Well as long as they are not misbehaving, there are people who really misbehave sometimes. You know, you ride a bus and sometimes you see a person that can not stand your face. They believe sometimes that you are Somali or are from some specific ethnic group. Somehow they put you in a position, at that time I can get disturbed.

Others perceive that the two identities can not be compared because the two cultures are different. The respondent also indicates that she is the new comer and that she is not interested in worrying about which identity is valued or which one is devalued. This is how she explains it:

> I: Well, now, what do you think of European Canadians yourself.
> R: Well, you know, when we say *Gaalo*, usually we think of, we think about, I mean, there is like two different sides to it. On the one hand, growing up within Somali community, growing up in Somalia, I mean, and also the differences of religion, when I think about *Gaalo*, usually, there is that initiative to separate ourselves from them in order not to assimilate. On the other hand, I don't think much about that. It has never really been an issue where I assess what I think of Canadians, or Europeans, I mean, I came to this country, I know I am the one who has left, I mean my own country. So, I am always that outsider and I go about their own business, I mean I am the one who is really visiting. So, as far I am concerned, they exist and don't pay any mind to them. I know they exist, I mean, and you can't just generalize, it is hard to really come up with, with a generalized perception of a collective people is really hard.

Another respondent sees all human beings as being equal. As she explains:

> I: What is your perception of *Gaalo* yourself?
> R: It is just a human person with a different color, he has his own religion I have my own religion. they have a different idea, I have a different, they have a different culture, I have a different culture, big time, the way they are thinking, the way I am thinking, the way they behave, the way I behave is totally different.

Another respondent says:

> R: Yeas I do, but they have their own values, and I have my own. Every body is right in their own.

> I: What do you think is the perception that white Canadians have about Somalis?
> R: Well, to begin with, what is missing from the discussion is that we do not get exposed to Canadian people, you know. For example, the Metropolitan Toronto is mainly comprised of a multicultural society. There are many different ethnic groups all over the area who came from many different countries. This multicultural thing creates barriers between groups. Also we don't get exposed to whites at all. You rarely get exposed to a white Canadian, may be if you go to their office. So because you don't get exposed to, you can not judge their identity or make perceptions about it. Also some white people are not Canadians. Any way what I can tell you is that Somalis do not exposed to whites at all. Every community is in its own cage, so there is no interaction between the cultures. So if you don't have any contact with them, then how can you have any perceptions about them.

Another respondents says the following:

> I: Let us say, since we established some kind of Canadian perception about Somalis, what do Somalis think about Canadians?
> R: But I don't think this has anything to do with color, well maybe it does. If there is anything that I think, it has more to do with the culture or not knowing each other, it also got to do with the expectations. I think because our culture or everybody's culture shapes the way they live. We Somalis came from a culture in which our life and surroundings is shaped up by the environment we live in and the circumstance we face. And one example is the expectations of the extended family, the sincerity and trust that we have towards each other, that is, trust is a lot, very important. I think that somehow disappeared for the Somalis in Canada because they realized that this culture is different so they can not walk to their neighbor and trust them. So if your neighbor is different and you realize that you can not just walk to the next door and explain your problems, then that really a problem. Because that is the kind culture you were raised and grew up

> with, but it has nothing to do with race. It is the culture and environment that shape up your life. So if I can't trust my white neighbor to explain some of my personal issues simply because he thinks I am sick or dump or may be he is not culturally able to understand me for what ever reason I withhold that I don't see that as a superior, I don't see that as inferior, I see that as cultural thing. No I don't see that, I see it that he does not understand me. So there is some difference, but to the extend which that can be translated to as some lack of acceptance, whether it is a religious and you think the person is unclean, or whether an elderly Somali grandfather or grandmother think that non Muslim person doesn't know anything about how this world is run, these are cultural issues, these are cultural values.

The above process of devaluation and counter-devaluation must be understood in terms of how the Somalis perceive themselves in terms of the value that they attach to their own identity and the challenges they face in terms those identity categories. Thus, the responses must be seen as a general reaction to how they perceive they are perceived. Despite the fact that Somali immigrants some sort of devaluation targeted towards their self and identity, they generally refuse to accept as a social reality.

Table 13 provides data about how Somalis perceive themselves and the values that they attach to their identity, given that they somehow perceive they are perceived negatively by the white Canadians.

Table 13
Somalis Perception of Themselves

Category	Frequency	%
positive	26	86.7
Negative	--	--
Neutral	3	10
No Response	1	3.3
Total	30	100

As it is clear from table 13, the majority of the respondents (86%), reject the idea that

they may be perceived as stigmatized. None of the respondents perceive themselves in any way as carrying stigmatic identity and about 10% of the respondents responded in a neutral manner. In other words, they perceive themselves as humans and that all human beings carry positively valued identity. However, unlike Goffman who deals with this issue in terms of stigma management, here we see a rejection of the stigma. In other words, Somalis do not engage in stigma management, but instead they reject it totally. As the following respondent points out:

> I: So, may be given that perception, what do you think of yourself?
> R: What do I think of myself in terms of?
> I: In terms of , given that they think of you that way.
> R: Think of myself as inferior to whites
> I: Of course not, no, never, I mean that is really, no, I think it is a problem that they have to deal with and the thing is I can understand given the history of slavery and colonialism, I can see where they are gathering the information from and the scope of things. But internally, what I am experiencing myself, if any body is inferior, I would think it is always the other guy, and not, not me, no, no. The other guy meaning other races.

Another respondent says:

> I: So in your head, do you sometimes accept what they think of you?
> R: No, I have to fight back, I have to be like they are. If my classmate gets 80% I have to get that too. but immediately after that they still think that I am black, that is dummy anyway.

Another respondent expresses her views this way:

> I: Since you think majority Canadians perceive you as such, what is your perception of yourself?
> R: Myself?
> I: yes.
> R: I think that no one can stop me from what I want. Maybe, I may meet some difficulties along the way, but I will not think that any failure of mine is the result of my race or ethnicity.

Another respondent provides the following response:

> I: So, So given the idea of white perception of black inferiority, do you accept that?
> R: I don't accept that there is inferiority that the whites believe they are

> superior? No, no I don't, I mean I don't accept that for the simple reason because that is not the way I grew up, that is not the system of values that I have. That somebody is basically different and superior based on some genetic color. No, I don't believe that and I don't expect anybody to ever accept that and I will never accept that because it is not logic and spells ignorance.

Others perceive the whole idea of identity perceptions, devaluation and counter-devaluation as meaningless and that all people are the children of Allah. As the following respondent explains:

> I: O.K., since you think that they separate themselves, do you feel that you are inferior to them?
> R: No, I don't feel anything, lower or higher than them. They are human beings just like me from a father and mother. So, sometimes when they get to know, they realize that you are gentle and generous. I used to take a big thermos of coffee during the break time because I couldn't go out. So I used to offer the tea to whoever wanted, then they started to come to me and I stared to take my whole coffee maker to school and also used to offer to the teacher and then she liked my coffee. So let me see, I think we are all the children of Allah you know, we are all equal.

So far, what I have been discussing can be considered as attitudinal perception and about identity valuation, devaluation, and counter-devaluation. I have pointed out that the respondents in general perceive that white Canadians do somehow perceive Somalis in terms of devalued identity categories, in other words, stigma. However, the respondents reject, as I have pointed out earlier, these stigma assignment. Moreover, the respondents in their turn, perceive white Canadians in terms of counter-devaluation, or counter-stigma. This is in fact, what I have referred as identity devaluation and counter-devaluation. But these are only perceptions and attitudes and as such are limited in terms of what conclusions that can be derived from them. In order to have a full understanding of the process, one has into the behavioral aspects of the process. In other words, I want to examine whether, the respondents engage in behaviors that can interpreted along the lines of counter-devaluation and the rejection of devalued identity and stigma. In order to that I will in the next few pages, whether the respondent associate or try to associate with

Canadians or not in terms of friendships; whether they perceive discrimination and if so, how do they deal with in terms of behavior. These behavioral categories will be finally assessed against the general perception of whether the respondents consider themselves Canadians or not. This last category is very important in that if the respondents do not consider themselves as Canadians, then it easy for them to reject the overall values of the Canadian society including all aspects of values, but that of the racialized aspects of the Canadian society. The idea of the rejection of the Canadian social values, because it is perceived to contain racialized and devalued identity categories, particularly, for the African immigrant, is achieved through total exclusivity.

Collective Exclusivity

With minor exception, the majority of the respondents deal with their perception of devalued identity by engaging in collective exclusivity. By collective exclusivity is meant that Somali individuals limit their social interaction within the confines of the Somali community. In other words, interaction with the outside society is very minimal. another strategy is the rejection of accepting Canadian as an identity. Another strategy is the rejection of the existence of discrimination. These preceding strategies are very important conceptually in that they show a consistent pattern of identity behavior. In other words, those who reject the placement of devalued identity markers have to by necessity avoid social interactions with the majority, which leads both to the rejection of the existence of discrimination and the refusal of Canadianess as an alternative identity. In other words, accepting all these categories will put the individual within the schema of the racialized identity system of the Canadian society. The only alternative to falling with this kind of racialized identity categories and differentiation to remain out of the social interaction process of the Canadian society. The first strategy used by the respondents to stay outside this racialized schema is to limit their social interaction within the confines of the community. As is shown in table 14:

Table 14
Do you have Canadian Friends that You Associate With

Category	Frequency	%
Yes	11	36.7
No	15	50
No Response	4	13.3
Total	30	100

As it is clear from table 14, 50% of the respondents do not have any Canadian friends with whom they associate. Another 36% claimed to have Canadian friends, with 13% not responding. Thus, what is clear from the table is that a large number of the respondents do not have any Canadian friends. As the following respondent explains

> I: Do you have any Canadian friends that you associate with?
> R: No.
> I: Why is that so?
> R: Well, Really, I haven't had the chance, I haven't had the chance to know them. I remember this one girl who came to my house and we had dinner together, it was in 1992. But after that I haven't had the chance to meet any Canadian friends. I usually do my shopping at this shop where all the customers are Somali. So it is very difficult to meet any one else. The only time that I went to the house of a Canadian person was few years ago when the owner of where I used to work had a death in his family. That is the only time.

Another respondent says this:

> R:....and also Somalis associate with each other, number one, it is very rare for a Somali to become friends with a stranger, they usually keep their relations among themselves, because they are new and it is very hard to adapt sometimes, we can not mingle with other people.

Still another respondent says:

> I: Do you have any Canadian friends that you associate with?
> R: Actually no, I have friends, but we don't go to their house that doesn't mean that we are not friends. We go to dinner or lunch we stay together, we laugh, but we don't go to each other's houses.

I: What do you think is the reason for that?
R: I don't know really, maybe it is cultural, but I never thought about that question before. Why don't I take my friends to my house and also go to their houses? If I invite them I take them to Somali restaurants.
I: So who do you spent most of your time with?
R: I spend most of my time with Somalis, because since I can get all the news about Canada from the media, from back home, you get from friends and relatives, and back home I have still my father and relatives that I support.

Looking at the table again, we see that a large number of the respondents indicate that they have Canadian friends. As the following respondent explains:

I: Do you have any Canadian friends that you associate with?
R: I have two great, great friends, I met this lady and gentleman they are husband and wife and I met them in 1994, they have been great, great friends for me. They are an old couple in their sixties and they have become like a second parent to me. The first time I met them I was working at a community where I was helping some Somali people with immigration issues, even though I was having my own problems with the immigration, but I was trying to help others. So they were given my name by another person to call me regarding a woman who they sponsored from a refugee camp in Kenya and who could not speak English. So they wanted me to go and educate them about our culture. What to expect of this woman who doesn't speak English whom they have to help, and all those small things. So, I helped them with that, they invited me to their home, they opened their arms to me and everything. Since then, I thought the work I have done for them was finished and that is it. But this lady wrote a beautiful Post Card saying she wants to keep the friendship. So I said yeah, I am open for friendship, then we have been calling each other ever since. She comes to my home, I go to her home. They have been like a grandparent to my son also because every time I send her something from his school, they volunteer to go there, they ask me, please let us attend his concert and his things at school, because mainly, they knew that I worked full time and could not school functions. So now, if he has a function at school, he calls them, oh, tomorrow I have this in school and they go.
I: That must be very nice.
R: Yeah, it is very nice. They are the only friends that I have at the moment.
I: So otherwise, do you spend most of your time with other Somalis.
R: Oh yeah, I work, like this place that I work at, it is a

> multicultural building, it is Somalis, Canadians, Europeans, you name it, everyone lives here. But my main focus in this place is the Somalis, because Somalis are left out of the system completely. There are small things which they need to know, like how to do things, and without that push they will give up so fast, they think this it I can't do it, so I encourage them and most of them are single parents, their husbands are dead in the war or whatever, they feel they can't manage with the kids, these are the kind of things, they have always a place here.

But reading at their interview responses of those who say they have Canadians reveals a completely different picture. That is, even though, the respondents claim that they have Canadian friends, their association tends to be limited to the professional or casual level. As the following respondent explains:

> I: Okay, how do you characterize your association with Canadians? Do you have Canadian friend that you associate and go to their houses?
> R: It is interesting I am a typical Somali I have a lot of Canadian friends. I think I am one of the few Somalis who deal with a lot of Canadian people. But come to think of it all of them are mainly professional, job related, or community related. I don't think I have a very personal friend. And even those one or two people either co-workers it is very difficult to build some friendships with them. I had an elderly friend that I used to work with in another company who always asked me come for launch, come for dinner. I try to avoid, I don't know why. I think there are no subjects to talk about with them, understanding is not there. I have a lot of Somali friends. I deal with them differently, and it is very intimate, good and friendly one. But with Canadian, we talk about issues, meetings and discussion, but nothing beyond that.
> I: So what do you think, what is going on in your mind why is it difficult to create friendship with Canadians?
> R: I honestly don't know. I asked myself a couple of times. I think it is the whole issue of being comfortable, the whole issue of being cohesive, look after yourselves only. And it can be subconscious, maybe it is the pressure from outside to you. You are not very comfortable you are not welcomed. Something is telling you deep in your head, even if you are friends, it is very superficial, very unreal. Also because of what happened to us as Somalis culturally. The uprooting and the things that happened. I think it replaces the extended family structure so it is more that cohesive. I think it is a social outlet. I think Somalis will get sick if they don't see each other.

Another respondent explains his interaction with the larger Canadian society as the

following:

> I: Do you have any Canadian friends that you associate with?
> R: Yeah, I do.
> I: What is the nature of your association, do they go to your home? Do you go to their homes?
> R: It is strictly professional, I usually associate with them through my association through student clubs, and things like that. So we usually plan to meet on social occasions and may be meet at a café. Maybe see a movie together, do things like that socially, but not, not visit each other's homes.

Others explain their visiting Canadian homes in terms of some perceived fear about Canadians. As the following respondents explains:

> I: Do have any Canadian friends that you associate with?
> R: many , yeah.
> I: Do you go to their homes and do they come to your home?
> R: No, I don't go to their homes, and I don't allow them to come to my house.
> I: Why not?
> R: I don't know, I am, have you heard about *Banaankisa Mare Geed Maradiisa Ma Qabsado*?
> I: Yeah.
> R: So these people you can never trust, I mean, a black person who came from Africa you can trust very them dearly. You see, your friend is your friend, but with the Canadians, you don't know whether this person is your friend, I mean people will use the slightest opportunity, you know, to, feed on what you give them, you know, I mean, you know some one can claim anything on you so as to get media attention or any other thing, you know. So I have some Canadian friends, but I am very conscious. But I also have black friend from Guyana, and I go to their places and we intermingle, they come to my place and you know and I go to their places. So any way, but I am very conscious about Canadians, male or female, very, very conscious.
> I: So you will never invite a Canadian to your house?
> R: Yeah and I want to keep it that way. I spent most of my time almost 99% of my time with other Somalis. To go back to the socialization idea one more time, you know, so many Canadian people have requested to take my kids with them so that you know, they play with their kids and I say no thank you for the invitation, you know, [laugh, laugh]. It is very funny, I mean I run into those kinds of problems.
> I: You think they will steal or harm the children, or what?
> R: I mean if they don't steal they could do bad things, so I mean, they might as well do anything, but I don't want to take chances.
> I: what might you worry about for example?

> R: Well, in the western society, the western societies we have a lot of funny things, not funny things, but a lot of scary things, you know, see what I mean. There are people who have been your next door neighbors for many years and then who are serial killers, I mean that we have been seen. We have seen it on the television and in the papers and from friends and others. You know, people who have, kids who have assaulted or abused and killed by people who are known to them. You see what the police are doing here is if a kid disappears, first of all they will go to their acquaintance these are the suspects. Because of that most of associates are Somalis almost 90%. I have no problem going to Somali houses men or women. I don't even have any second thoughts, but with white Canadians no, I mean you got to be very careful. Look at the incest, look at the people coming to television claiming some one has sexually abused them seven or eight years ago simply to get attention, you know. Suppose you go with a white women to her apartment or she comes to your apartment, how do you know what will she say later on. We have seen so many black kids who have been implicated for rape and it is not rape. How many people are serving jail time for consensual sex and have been accused of rape, so I hope no body takes it personally and I want my Somali friends to be very conscious. Be fair with the whites, socialize with them, but be on the guard, expect anything, you know. And I think when you keep that distance the white men, the white women will respect you.

Another respondent explains her experience in the following:

> I: Do you have any Canadian friends that you interact with?
> R: Yes. But most of the time I work with Somali people , so I have to be with them most of the time. As for Canadians, we may come together sometimes for dinner but not that much. I spend most of my time with Somalis. There are cultural barriers, suppose If people have a death in their family I don't know how to convey condolences to them. Sometimes they may want me to write a letter or card, but that is not my culture, I didn't learn to do that. Also, I am not trying to fit into their culture, I am just doing it my way. Some of my friends may send a Christmas card, but I don't send anything and I told them that I don't send Christmas cards.

The second strategy used by the respondents is to reject Canadian identity as an alternative identity for being Somali. This I believe has something to do with the reality that accepting Canadian as an alternative identity puts the respondents in the position of to becoming a minority Canadian, which is something that the respondents in this study are trying to avoid. As will see later, the rejection of being Canadian is not rejected merely because one doesn't want to be considered as Canadian, but rather, because they

perceive they are not accepted as true Canadians.

Table 15
Will You Ever Consider Yourself a Canadian

Category	Frequency	%
Yes	4	13.3
No	24	80
No Response	2	6.7
Total	30	100

As it is clear from Table 15, only 13% of the respondents claimed that they would consider themselves Canadian, as compared 80% of the respondents who said that they would never consider themselves Canadian. For those who claim that they will consider themselves Canadian, the responses were very short and to the point. As the following respond indicates:

> I: Do you think you will ever consider yourself a Canadian?
> R: Of course, yeah, I will be Canadian any time.

Another respondents says:

> I: Do you think you will ever consider yourself Canadian?
> R: I am a Somali Canadian.

Some of the respondents indicate that they would like to consider themselves Canadian but are in a constant struggle between the demands of a prior culture and their fear that they may not be accepted as Canadian by the majority. As the following respondent suggests:

> I: Okay, do you think you will consider yourself Canadian?
> R: I want to but I don't think so. I am in a constant fight with my identity and the host country's fight not to accept me. It is a two way street. The Canadians must also help or participate if I have to achieve a full Canadian identity. For now, I think logically and culturally, I will remain

> Somali. It is hard for any person to consider themselves Canadian. No I don't.

Others consider themselves Canadian when they are outside of Canada than when they are in Canada. As the following respondent explains:

> I: Do you think you will ever consider yourself Canadian?
> R: The first that I considered myself as Canadian was last year's Christmas. I went to England with a Canadian Passport. They said were are you from? I said I am Canadian, simple, I said that, nothing else, then they said where is your passport, it was an empty Passport with no visa and nothing. I could not even believe it, the way we used to be refused visa, I remember. They just said how long are you going to be there, I said 17 days. The only question they asked was what do you do there? I guess that is a question they ask every body, I don't know, that may, I hope that they ask every body, not because they see me as Somali or black. Any way, I tend to consider myself as Canadian when I am not here than when I am in Canada.

Another respondent rejects the idea of considering himself Canadian, but at the same time points that he considers himself Somali when he is with Somalis and Canadian when he is with Americans or other Canadians. As he explains:

> I: Do you think that you will consider yourself Canadian?
> R: No, because even themselves, they don't consider themselves as Canadians. And if you look at the names that they call themselves like Italian-Canadian, Jewish-Canadian, French-Canadian, so they all using that name why don't I use Somali-Canadian. I like Canada, but I am still Somali. When I am with the Somalis I am Somali, when I am with the American or with Canadians I say that I am Canadian.

Despite these deviations, the majority of the respondents do not entertain the idea of considering themselves as Canadian. But even among those, their refusal of ever considering themselves as Canadian is mainly conditioned by circumstance found in the host environment. As the following respondent points out:

> I: Do you think you will ever consider yourself Canadian?
> R: I don't think so, no. I don't consider myself and I will never consider myself Canadian because if you don't get your right as a citizen, if on the one side, they look at you like an immigrant, then there is no point of claiming citizenship as an indigenous person. My kids who are born here I

> don't tell them that, I tell them this your country, this is your birth place, but deep in my heart I know, it is not their country, deep in my heart I know, this is a place they will never have the right to be a full citizen unless there are miracles which I don't think will happen. I don't think there will ever be a black prime Minster in the next two hundred years. So what is the point of calling yourself or assuming you are a citizen when you are blocked from all opportunities.

Another responds says:

> I: Do you think that you will ever consider yourself as Canadian?
> R: No, I think, well first, when I took the Canadian Passport, there were many thinks that I believed like special rights as a citizen, but, when I saw that this Passport is something that is given to you and can be taken away, the Canadian Passport is nothing to me, and there is nothing that I will replace with my Somaliness.
> I: What do you mean by the Passport being taken?
> R: The Canadian Passport is a document, or citizenship that this country gave you, the day you commit some crimes, they can take back from you. It helps with traveling to other countries because you don't need visa's, but, I can not compare my Somaliness to being Canadian, because, being Somali is something that you will always keep and that you are happy about, Sometimes you forget what is Canadian.

Another respondents explains his experience as the following:

> I: would you ever consider yourself a Canadian?
> R: No.
> I: Why?
> R: Well, I don't know, maybe, I came to this country grown up. Since I have seen a lot of obstacles that do not allow me to integrate to this society, I think that is one of the main reasons that I can not count myself as Canadian by heart. Maybe, I might carry the passport, but I still believe that I am Somali, will remain Somali. So to be honest with you now, I don't think that I will ever consider myself a Canadian.
> I: Is that because the Canadians do not consider you as a Canadian, or is it because you do not want to consider yourself Canadian because of your culture?
> R: Since I came to this country grown, my cultural believes do not allow me to leave my identity and consider someone that I am not. The reason I came to this country is because of some problems. I did not come here to change my country and my cultural values, and also the fact that this society is predominantly white, and the fact that you are black, partially it is acceptance.
> I: So you think that your color inhibits you from fully integrating into the Canadian society?

R: Off course that is true, because as you know, this country in terms of land is too big, but the population is very small, the resources are large, and no body allows you to get part of it, so I don't think it is wise for one to consider themselves as Canadian and whether you came here or you were born, you will still be considered as a second class citizen. So I don't see a reason That I can become a Canadian while I am Somali.
I: So since you suspect that you will always remain a second class citizen, is that why you want to remain Somali?
R: No question about my Somaliness, I don't want to abandon my Somaliness, no question about that, but if I can receive a worm welcome I wouldn't mind to live in here, but the problem is that , I mean there is a line and you can't cross it, that is the main thing. I mean, these people do not want you to progress, the fact that you are black there is obstacles, especially for you that are laid down for you. So that is very hard.
I: Do you think that other immigrants and refugees like you from the European and other countries who are white have better opportunities than you have?
R: That is very obvious, actually the white immigrant the ones that come from Europe are always better off than the black immigrant, the fact is that no one can tell him apart from the rest of the society, he can not be targeted.

Other refuse the Canadian identity because they think that their Somali identity is already well establishes and does not one any transformations. As the following respondents explains:

I: Do you think you will ever consider yourself Canadian?
R: No.
I: Why not?
R: Actually I have been in this country, I came here when I was already Somali, when I have had my own identity established. I mean I am a Canadian citizen, but I don't consider myself Canadian.

The most enlightening response in relationship to the considering of the Canadian identity came from one respondent who rejects the idea of identity or citizenship tied to any group. This is what she said:

I: Would you even consider yourself a Canadian?
R: To be honest, I don't consider to be a citizen of any country at all, I think of myself as an intellectual, period, just myself.
I: Not even a Canadian intellectual?
R: Not even a Canadian intellectual, well I like something about Canada, like the

> people and the institutions here, but not like nationalist type thing. Because, I am a liberal, what you might call you know, I don't want to say libertarian, I am egalitarian, I like things like Medicare, free education, you know. If the United had those things today, I would have loved to go there. So for me, it is a matter of social justice and issues like that and if Peru next year adopts much more progressive social outlook I would move to Peru.

The third attitudinal strategy of staying out of the racialized Canadian system is to deny the existence of discrimination. This strategy is very important in that it shows, as I have pointed out earlier, a consistent pattern of behavior. If individuals in general do not accept minority status, the most logical behavior is not recognize or notice the existence of any discrimination towards them from the majority.

Table 16
Perceived Discrimination Among Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
Yes	14	46.7
No	12	40.0
No Response	4	13.3
Total	30	100

As it is clear from Table 16, the respondents are almost equally divided between those who said that they have experienced discrimination in Canada and those who say they have not. Those who say that they have not experienced discrimination are very much represented by the following respondent.

> R: Well, if it is what is said on the news, or the reality, I myself, I have no experience in terms of jobs in terms of management positions, but the lower jobs, I haven't seen any discrimination, or that we are seen as inferior, or looked down upon, or something, no I haven't seen that. but a lot of people who came before us, who are black or Africans, the most things that I hear from blacks, those came before us, who faced some problem in 1970's or the 1960's who did not have any rights in this country. As Africans, the majority are people who came after the 1980's. By that time, governments have pressured organizations to reduce discrimination, so I haven't seen any discrimination in the public, may be in the management positions, they may exist even now. suppose, if you have a

bachelor's degree, in order to compete with a white person who has the same degree, you have to have one degree more than him, but within the lower jobs, I don't know if that this exists.

The responses of those who said they have experienced discrimination range from those who say " every day" and those who have learned from seconds hand experiences such as talking to other people who may have experienced discrimination.

I: Have you experienced any discrimination in Canada?
R: Every day.

Another respondents says the following:

R: I have experienced, I think, more than the racial discrimination based on color, discriminations based on language barriers and not being able to speak the language and because of that, being spoken to in a such a way that suggests because you are foreigner, because you don't speak the language that in the eyes of whoever it is that you are speaking to, they don't see you as someone with an opinion, or someone with a mind, they really don't . Even, even now that I speak the language, when I am going to any service clinic, medical clinic, or anything like that , and they recognize you as Somali, or non white and probably immigrant. They begin to speak to you in a way that is as far I am concerned extremely discriminating because they speak with you loader completely assuming that don't understand the language. Even now I see that all the time. And also, it is really hard to mention all of them, but there are a lot of incidents where I have seen discrimination.

Another respondent says:

I: Have you experienced any discrimination since you came to Canada?
R: Yeah a lot of times, a lot of times. First of all it was when applied for a job. When they call you for an interview, the first thing they do is find out who you are because when they look at your resume and your work experience they always imagine maybe they are getting somebody who is white and when you show up and they see you that you an African women and apart from being black being a Muslim that counts too, and sometimes you with your *Hijab* and from their they tell you point blank we have a dress code. They ask is this the way you are going to dress.

If the answer is yes, then you won't get the job. See when I first came, I used to think it was O.K. I thought because maybe that is there is a policy until I found out it was not O.K. If you have the experience and you can do the job, then they should not restrict you from what you believe and that is the time I visited I think the human rights office and read their code and every thing. So there was a time after that when I applied for a job and they took me, after taking me they decided I should put my *Hijab* down, I agreed to put the large cover but I kept a small *Hijab* and then they said no you can't work with that thing, it is too bothersome for you, and this and that. But I said it does not bother me or anything. So I went to this human rights group who intervened. It took a while for them to understand the situation, but after everything was O.K. I still though I had to leave the job because I was too uncomfortable. I though I won't it was still uncomfortable for me to work for them.

I: Does your son talk about racial issues encountered outside the home?

R: Oh, yes from the school, he is a very out going boy, he likes every one. I think it was last year when he started grade five, there was a new student in the class, but I would say I won't blame the student. He was, I think, he is from Sarbia, Sarbia, {Serbia} something of the sort. He is very new to the country maybe six months or something like that. This boy didn't see any blacks maybe in his country, he has never seen any other skin colors apart from white. So I think this bothered him and he went to talk his mom or somebody else and then he was told not to play with those people he doesn't know and are the different color. So one time, my son was just playing with other boys whom he plays with every time and he pulled one boy and suddenly told him don't play with that one he is not your kind, you should play with us we are your kind and talking about skin said we are white, he is dark and you should not play with him and that really bothered my son. I told him that maybe he is new so don't worry about him, but if it happens again let the teacher know. So then it happened a couple of times again , and my son went and spoke with the teacher and the teacher said she can't do anything about it. So I said no, you have to do something about it, you have to call the mother and make sure this child doesn't say that again because this is the way he is going to grow up knowing and if this school says that it does not encourage discrimination you have to stop it right now because this child is growing big. So it was intervened and the problem was solved.

Even those who recognize the existence of discrimination, do not want to talk about discrimination in terms of racial and color based

discrimination, or it does not necessarily bother them. As the following respondent explains:

> I: Have you ever experienced any kind of discrimination in your job or anywhere else?
> R: Well, sometimes, people belief that I am from another place, of course sometimes there are cultural differences and you know, I always used to be positive about that. When it comes to work, I always think in positive terms and when it comes to cultural interpretations, especially when we get to the point, like sometimes we used to have potlucks. we used to go out together and every body cooks their own food. I used to bring something that I cooked and we used to share things and sometimes they used to criticize my food and say this is not a proper food and I used to criticize them too, that is it.

What is apparent from the above response is the respondent does not take the concept of discrimination seriously and it does not seem to bother her. At some points the whole idea of discrimination is reduced to minor cultural differences in terms of criticism about food. The respondent further makes it clear that she deals with discrimination or translates it into positive terms.

Others while recognizing the existence of discrimination try to ignore it. As the response of the respondent indicates:

> I: Okay great, have you experienced any type of discrimination whether it is job related or other since you came to Canada?
> R: I think yes I have seen it. I have a lot. I think it has different scales, some of them I deliberately ignored them and I tried to convince myself that it is not a racism but, umm, umm, I think because of my faith and background and believe I came with it doesn't affect but I see it in a daily basis. May be daily basis, that could an exaggeration, but I see it a lot, I encountered and it has different scales and a lot of those I see I ignore it to some extent. Umm, yes but I have personally experienced, I have seen it. I have experienced as a member of the community, as a Somali, I have experienced it in more convert ways, jokes, I have experienced in job interviews and job expectations, I have experienced in regular live where I wanted to rent an apartment or I heard other people who are in that problem. I have experience in my job well my job is to help people to find

housing and some daily basics. There was an instance where I was told that elderly people call and say look I have a problem with this colored person in my place I don't like any colored people here even if the person who is talking to him at the other end is colored too. And even if they know I think they are careless about what they are saying, and that is what they believe. I participated in a lot of discussions about race relations and defining anti-racism and issues which related to my job. I work for the ministry of public housing which have a lot of social housing issues particularly senior housing and they try to help people to live coherently and I have witnessed discussions of sixty, seventy, thirty years old white men who have participated in the first or the second world war who have his own thinking and perceptions who now lives in a government subsidized senior housing who doesn't get along with the seventy or sixty year old black person. Because of an early belief, and say I don't want see these people, these people smell or whatever; clearly there are these conflicts daily in my job. On the one hand, I try to help people to live together and get along and on the other hand to set up a policy.
I: Well that is very interesting. Umm, earlier you have mentioned that you some points ignore that or at some point it doesn't affect you, can you elaborate on both situations?
R: Well you can see commentary things that you don't like, like things which are intentionally intended for you which you don't like, in the parking lot, in supermarkets, you know, commons staff like that. And the only reason why it happens to you is that you guys are two different people or in some cases it is obvious and it is fun. Things like you new comers, you refugees, you are taking my job, those things and it doesn't bother me much because I don't want to spend energy and time talking to or explaining someone who is already at that level, at that thinking and that ignorance.

I: Umm, so discrimination doesn't affect you?
R: It doesn't affect me, I ignore it. So far I try to succeed that it doesn't affect me, it don't internalized but it continues. And if it keep on going people are not all safe. There are people whom it will affect in their self-esteem. There is younger people who will internalize this, older people. I don't know ten, twenty years down the road whether I could be that patient.

The idea of ignoring the existence of discrimination among Somalis was also observed by one of my respondents who accused the Somalis of trying to ignore discrimination when they are experiencing it. The respondent explains her observation as the following:

R: [Interruption] And this is one of the problems, I can tell you this. Somalis are full of it, because they don't want to be seen as black, they are racists of the worst kind. And this is one of the things that really, I wish you can bring about. Because for them, to be called black they think, this is the whole thing about the bleaching stuff. Why do the girls bleach their skin. The fact is they do not want to be black, because if I am called black, I am black so what, and the whole idea of the Somalis feeling being insulted is they think they are somewhere between the white and the black. I am doing a research now, where there are hundreds and hundreds of Somali professionals with their credentials being unrecognized, they are being literally curtailed and excluded, yet, I took a questionnaire, have you experienced racism, more than fifty percent say no, because, and I wonder if this is a data conducted on other group of black refugees, they would have said, like Ugandans, seventy or eighty percent yes I have experienced racism, he apologies for the racism, because he thinks the person is mistaken, because of him as black, and of course he is not black, he is Somali. Somalis are for big, big surprise, because they full of it I can tell you this. Because, they themselves, if I today walk into the street with a black men, they will call me names and give me a dirty look. If walk with the same type white guy they wouldn't mind.
I: Where do you think they are getting these ideas?
R: Because, they are full of it, they think they have a straight nose, and they are not Africans. So some of them are realizing after all that the white man will call them a Niger, it doesn't matter, so the Somalis are now in a kind of better sweet situation. see when I was in Somalia they used to say that we are Irish, all other kinds of little [laugh, laugh] oh, oho.
I: What do they say about the Irish?
R: Some kind of the African Irish, they think of themselves, that is why they created the Arab mythology-Abu this, or Abu that, that they Arabs. This is a fact that a Somali man who is doing a Ph.D. at the University of [.....], I write things in the Inherent, who wrote adamantly, the guy is doing a Ph.D. in literature that Isaqs and Daroods are Arabs. I said on what basis, do you have empirical data, like this an scholar. This is the same people who believe, two brother went together, both ate dead meat, but one of them vomited himself...come on, you know, you know what I mean, we are living in twentieth century. People know a bit of genetics and other things. You see that is the whole point, the Somalis are victims of their own prejudice, and now they getting it big time and they can't swallow it.
I: So what is with the bleaching cream now? is it a large number of people that use it?
R: Oh, very huge, very, very huge number.
I: Is it called bleaching cream?
R: Yeah, it literally bleaches your melon, it makes you lighter, it makes you white, it doesn't actually make white, but it takes you lighter.
I: And how long, do you have o use every time?
R: Umm, I think, I don't know, but the night before the wedding, they mix a portion, you know they mix different bleaching creams, they soak themselves in it and they sleep on it. What it does is it arrest the production of the melon, an destroys your skin, and I hear the day after, the night before then wedding, they wash the things with a clear soap, and they wear it. The other thing that I noticed,

> that sixty to seventy to eighty percent, I would say, of all Somali women, have a lighter hair bleached. That doesn't go with their texture.

However, when I asked the same respondent whether she experienced herself discrimination, she said no. As the her response indicates:

> I: Have you experienced any kind of discrimination in your work, or anywhere else?
> R: No, work? I always have literally what I want. People have always been nice to me. There were times, you know, but not overtly, I think people have been kind to me.

What is clear from the above data is that Somalis in general do not acknowledge the existence of racial discrimination in Canada. The lack of acknowledgement of racial discrimination is very consistent with their overall rejection of the Canadian social structure. Accepting and acknowledging racial discrimination will amount to accepting the Canadian system of stratification.

Summary

In this chapter, I have discussed the identity challenges and process among Somali immigrant in Toronto, Canada. The chapter showed that the process of migration conditions identity processes. The main conclusion of the chapter is that race and identity processes are social definitions that are given meaning by the particular social structures that they exist. I have show this by examining the identity and therefore identification systems of the Somali society before migration, the kind and the nature of identification systems that they encounter once they arrive in Canada, and the strategies, if any, they use in order to offset these imposed identity categories. The main conclusion of this chapter, thus is that race and identity processes are social definitions that exist in particular social structures lending an empirical support for Blumer's theory of race relations. This conclusion further leads to my second conclusion, that is, given the differential social structures Goffman's concept of stigma is found to be lacking in

its ability to explain the process of stigma in situations where is a lack of shared normative expectations

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has addressed the historical, personal, and structural processes of migration and identity encounters by Somali immigrants who have relocated in Toronto, Canada. Life history interviews provided the bulk of the data. The data were analyzed through categories informed by concepts and perspectives drawn from symbolic interactionism, specifically Blumers' theory of race relations, Goffman's concept of stigma and the process of identity devaluation, and Maines' proposition of migration as a social process.

The main concern of the dissertation has centered on two sets of interrelated issues. The first set pertained to the process of migration. This process was conceptualized in terms of what I have referred to as the exit experiences and encounters on the road. These concepts formed the two pillars under which the process of migration was articulated. The second set of issues pertained to identity processes and challenges. The main question raised here has been how people who migrate from societies that do not employ racialized identity categories in their everyday interaction deal with identity challenges imposed by a society whose social organization contained such categories?

The theoretical connection between these two sets of issues has been grounded in Maines' (1978) proposition that identities migrate as much as bodies and that the kinds of identities employed after migration depend on the degree of identification with either the original or the destination environment. Moreover, the two sets of questions are

further tied to the historical and structural conditions that set them into motion. The concepts under which the three spheres of inquiry are brought together is drawn from Blumer's theory of race relations which suggest that identity negotiations, and therefore race relations, are the result of both individual interactions and the structural/historical conditions within which these interactions are carried out. Structure here is seen as the formulation of society as a framework but not the determinant of human action. Thus, my findings which pertain to identity processes led me to an analysis which recognizes the overall migration process as well as the particular historical backgrounds that migrating individuals carry with them, as well as the structural conditions that provides the framework within which these immigrants must operate. It is also these conditions that provide the framework within which the pattern and the nature of race and identity processes are given meaning. This assertion is only possible, though, if one recognizes migration as a social process and rather than merely physical movement.

First, the findings of this study point out that migration is a social process as opposed to mere physical relocation in that migrating individuals carry with them their cultural, as well as their identity categories. Migrating individuals also go through several processes that require constant interaction both among themselves and with other individuals in their attempt to reach a final destination. Thus, it is this understanding that renders migration as a social process. Second, I assert that Somali identity perspectives are incomprehensible to the Canadian social system; correspondingly, the Canadian social and identity systems are incomprehensible to Somalis. This is so because the historical and the structural conditions within which these two sets of identity categories are constructed are quite different which results in mutual incomprehensibility. This mutual lack of understanding leads to my third

conclusion that Somalis perceive that they are perceived by the Canadian majority in terms of negative identity values, and they in turn engage in what I have referred to as counter-devaluation of Canadian identity. This process finally leads me to conclude that Goffman's discussion of stigma is incomplete in that the process of stigmatization and identity devaluation is dialectical in nature.

Migration as a Social Process

The data from this study suggest that migration must be seen as a social process as opposed to mere physical relocation, and once conceptualized as such, has the potential to empirically situate the experiences of those who migrate in a more holistic manner. This process entails several aspects that show both physical movements along with individual and social interaction processes, as we will see later. These aspects are analytically subdivided into exit experiences and encounters on the road. Exit experiences refer to the time and motives for migration, while encounters refer to obstacles and experiences that individuals face while migrating from Somalia to Canada. In what follows, I will discuss these processes.

The first two sets of the migration process are timing and motives for migration. The timing of migration has been analyzed in terms of whether one left before or after the civil war, while the motives for migration have been examined in terms of whether one migrated for political or economic reasons. In terms of the time of migration, the majority of the individuals migrated after 1988, indicating political motives, while 30% migrated before 1988 indicating economic motives. Nevertheless, the data still indicate the existence of significant variation. Moreover, the data suggest that time of migration is not only the result of the onset of a violent civil. If that were the case, then the whole

population would have left Somalia. The data in this study provide ample evidence that timing is not necessarily marked by the onset of the civil war. It is also the result of social interaction and negotiation processes as well as the availability of resources and other necessary conditions. Some of the respondents in the study, as shown in Chapter Five, engaged in a very complex interaction processes regarding whether to or not to leave. In other words, some of the respondents tried to calculate whether or not the war would continue in order to decide to leave. The point here is that these individuals were in a situation to interpret the condition of the war. This process of action and interpretation is achieved through migrating to the rural areas of the country in order to wait and look. Only after they have realized that the war was not going to end did they decided to leave. The data also indicate that that some of the respondents went back to Mogadishu several times in order to assess the conditions of the war. In some situations, family members disagreed on whether or not to leave based on their individual assessments of the war. This may also mean that those who left the country right after the civil war were better evaluators of the situation. In any case, I assert that the time of migration alone is not a good indicator of political or economic motives. Instead, what the data in this study showed is that the time of migration is determined by a host of interactions and negotiation processes as well as the impact of the civil war itself.

The second aspect is motives for migration. My data indicate that 56% of the respondents migrated because of political motives, while 44% migrated for economic and other similar motives. Based on these data, we can observe an almost equal distribution in terms of motives. Some of the respondents can be considered what others (Kunz, 1973; 1981, Gilad, 1996; Keller, 1975) referred to as acute refugees or refugees of civil strife in that they were caught in the outbreak of the civil war without

anticipating it in advance. Others had left the country just before the civil war in an anticipation of what was to come, while still others left the country sometime before the civil war for economic and other similar reasons. Some, in fact, left the country because of the civil war after coming back from a circular migration. That is, these individuals were regular seasonal economic immigrants who were caught in the civil war after one of their vacations in Somalia. Still others were caught in the civil war because they were not able to acquire a visa to migrate to other countries. The data therefore, show that the motives for migration among the respondents were varied along a continuum from purely political to purely economic. Thus, the conclusion here is that in order to understand the motives for migration one has to simultaneously consider both the political and economic conditions of the originating country as well as the individual processes that condition both the time and the motives for migration.

The third aspect is migration chains and routes. This concept, as mentioned earlier, is intended to capture the multiple routes and the number of potential host countries that immigrants went through and the time frames and the social and individual interactions involved. Migration chains and routes entail two aspects. The first deals with the distinction between refugees and immigrants. I assert that migration processes of immigrants tend to involve in short chains, while those of refugees involve long chains. This conclusion is based on the observation that refugees from generalized civil strife situations go through several different countries in order to reach a desired final destination simply because they can not acquire the necessary documents to travel directly from one location to another and thus find themselves having to figure out the

best alternative route to reach a final destination.[30] Migration chains and routes are conceptually useful to understand the relationship between migration as physical process as over against a social process. The data indicate that the number of chains and the actual countries that individuals went through is quite varied. Some of the respondents took a direct flight from Somalia to Canada without going through intervening stops. This situation was possible for individuals who left the country before 1988 and other Somalis who held Kenyan citizenship at the time of the Somali civil war. These individuals were able to acquire travel visas, or were not required to have a visa in order to travel to Canada. On the other end of the continuum were individuals who went through more than five countries in order to reach Canada. The distribution of the data indicates that in terms of migration chains and routes, the respondents consist of both refugees and immigrants.

The second aspect of migration chains pertains to the assertion that migration is a social process as opposed to mere physical relocation. Of course, migration chains and routes can be considered as a physical movement if one only considers the physical body that travels through these points. For example, case number twenty-seven (see Table 5) traveled from Somalia and went through Saudi Arabia-Iraq-Jordan-Russia and then reached Canada. This process can be thought of as a body moving through space. However, if we examine the interactional and negotiation process that that this particular respondent experienced in order to reach Canada, then we ought to understand migration as a social process. This respondent, for example, left Somalia at

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[30] This type of refugee is distinguished from refugees who are resettled from refugee camps by the sponsorship of international agencies. This type of refugee is characterized by a maximum of two chains. However, those who came from generalized civil war situations, who are recognized and sponsored by a country or an organization go through

the end of 1987, and went to Saudi Arabia to work. However, after a period of time working as an illegal immigrant, because he did not have an *Iqama* which is the Saudi version of permanent residency, he decided to leave because he could not work in that situation. He went to Iraq in 1989 with a visa acquired through negotiating with a middleman between him and the Iraqi Embassy in Saudi Arabia. Once in Iraq, he met some other Somali immigrants who were talking about going to Europe which led to his also considering going there. That set the stage for his next move. According to the respondent's own words, "I kept hearing that so and so went to Germany, and so and so went to Holland, you know, and I thought why don't you go to one of those places too". It is also at this time that the respondent heard about Canada through his social networks and that the best way to go there was to board a plane that transits through Canada in route to Cuba. The respondent then went to Jordan and paid an airline representative to arrange for a flight that goes through Canada. He took a Jordanian airline through Cyprus and then an Aeroflot from Cyprus in-route to Cuba through Moscow and Canada and defected while the airplane was refueling in Gondor, Canada.

This whole process was achieved, as I have discussed in Chapter Five, through an intense process of migration networks. The data in this study show that the majority (63%) of the respondents either had friends or family members that helped facilitate their migration. These migration networks among the Somali immigrants involved multi-nation networking that merged both financial support among relatives and a complicated web of information sharing. As I have pointed out in Chapter Five, one of the respondents said, "we talk, you know, we talk". This talk or information sharing took many shapes and forms. In its generic form, some individuals among the

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several chains as a result of finding the best alternative to reach a desired final

community work as information agents. Sometimes information is shared between relatives assisting each other, while on other situations, it is shared by total strangers. One of the respondents, for example, described how she changed her initial plan of landing in Belgium, and instead deciding to proceed to Canada through a discussion that she had with Somali immigrants aboard a plane from Africa to Europe. In her words, they said, "why do you want to go to Belgium, the people there speak French and you don't speak French. Why don't you come with us to Canada where people speak English and you don't have to learn a new language." Thus, the data on migration networks indicate that bodies can not migrate without the necessary social and interaction components, such as the social networks within which the movement of the body is given meaning and direction.

Another aspect of the migration process pertains to return migration. Based on the data from this study, 60% of the respondents said they intend to go back to Somalia, while 20% do not and about 10% said they were unsure. Based on these figures, one would assume that the majority of the respondents intend to return. However, as mentioned earlier, there is a conceptual difference between the intention to return and the actualization of that intention. This distinction is very important in that, unlike the migration literature which ties refugee immigrants distinction on the assumption that refugees tend to entertain return migration while immigrants do not, I found that refugees realize early that they can not return despite their desire to do so. In other words, the distinction between refuges and immigrants on the basis of the intention to return is not a valid sociological distinction unless one examines whether individuals actually can return. If they believe that they can not return in actuality, then data

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destination.

concerning intentions can not distinguish immigrants from refugees.

The fact that the respondents in this study consist of both immigrants and refugees based on the above categories, leads me conclude that both immigrants and refugees initially entertain feelings of wanting to return to their homelands. This research also in some ways supports Madawi's (1994) conclusion that return migration is not so much a function of refugees or immigrants, but of the political and economic situations of individuals in their home countries. That is, immigrants who are politically and economically a part of a minority group do not intend to return, while those from the majority groups do intend to return. Thus, the data again shows here that the desire to return is not a good indicator that can distinguish immigrants from refugees. However, what is clear from the data, despite some variations, is that the largest majority entertains feelings of wanting to return to their homeland. This observation is very important for the discussion of this dissertation in that feelings of return may increase the level of attachedness that individuals may have to their original homeland. That is, individuals who maintain feelings of wanting to return may insist of not embracing the cultural values of the home environment and maintain original homeland values. This process of carrying identity and cultural values from the original country along with the historical and cultural background of the immigrants that may be different from those of the host environment is what must be seen as the basis of the nature of identity processes and therefore race relations that may appear. Moreover, the process of identity and self migration that may result from the migration process is also influenced by conditions in the host environment, one of which is the process of refugee determination.

The process of refugee determination is a very complex undertaking. The

Canadian definition of refugee status is mainly derived from the 1952 United Nation's definition that stresses that claimants must establish a verifiable fear of persecution. However, in situations where there is a generalized civil war such verification might not be easy when individuals flee from ensuing war and can not show any kind of physical and/or mental evidence of persecution. In such situations, the only option, and the one the Canadian Refugee and Immigration Board used to determine which group is victimized and which is the victimizer, is to use clan affiliation of the Somali society as a criterion. However, due to the fact that at least the overwhelming majority of the Somali immigrants in Canada can not be distinguished from each other on the basis of race, ethnicity or cultural aspects, the determination process is solely based on clan differentiation.[31] Accordingly, clan based differentiation is very difficult to implement in that individuals can claim any clan they wish to. This identity game can be easily played. Indeed, even Somalis themselves can not determine who is from what clan based on appearance alone, unless the person indicates membership or a social network investigation is carried out.[32] Therefore, the refugee hearing process becomes the site of an identity masks and closed awareness contexts (Strauss, 1959). At the center of this

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[31] It is important to note again, though, that that the discussion here or throughout the dissertation does not necessarily mean that the idea of racial distinctions is totally alien to Somali society. What I have here in mind, is the so-called Jareer people (see Luling, 1995, Besteman, 1996, Enow, 1994, 1997). This group, albeit unjustly, is distinguished from the rest of the society on the basis of racial categories. In essence, they are considered to fall outside the so-called clan system and are considered ethnically non-Somali. A comparison between this group and the so-called Somali groups in terms of racial and identity challenges in Canada is something that I would like to carry in the near future. However, racially based identity categories are not employed as identity categories among the rest of the society. And this dissertation is based on those groups.

[32] This is not to say that Somalis do not know who is from what clan, but that they can not tell solely on the basis of appearance. Due to this problem, Somalis have a local system of identifying who is from what clan through a well-coordinated social network. However, these networks are not easily available to the Canadian immigration officers.

process are the Canadian Immigration Officers trying to determine who is refugee and who is not on the basis of clan membership and individual refugees trying to situate their claim in line with the clan officially defined as the victimized one. Several important sociological issues enter into the picture. The first issue is who has the power to define the situation Formally, the Canadian Refugee and Immigration board has the power; interactionally, Somalis do. The definition of the situation as an official process is the following: Refugees are individuals from victimized clans. Non-refugees are individuals that come from dominant rather than victimized clans. This definition of the situation, though, is not as simple as it looks because of the general lack of knowledge by the Canadian officers about Somali clan issues and the Somali knowledge of victim and dominant clan categories. This situation leads to Somali identity announcements as victim clan members, and the Canadian officials' identity placement which results in either the validation of fictive identity or the confirmation of true identity (Stone, 1962), in which case, the results may not necessarily be true. Thus, the main conclusion here is that the process of clan determination is neither useful nor desirable even in terms of policy making. For one, individuals who claim a fictive clan membership can not be automatically considered as immigrants than refugees. The process of refugee determination, at least among those who came from generalized civil war situations, must not be tied to individual based determination. This is even more so, because if the Canadian government can not return those they see as non-refugees to Somalia, then there is little use of that determination. Beyond that, though, the process of clan-based refugee determination creates a condition where clan identities become salient and instrumental at the same time among Somali refugees in Canada.

Thus, one of the major conclusion of this dissertation given the data and in

consideration of the issues discussed above, is that what Maines has called a "social process" must be unpacked and more carefully dimensionalised. While, indeed, migration is far more complex than demographers have traditionally recognized, and on that score Maines is correct, it is important to go beyond his analysis to identify in what respects migration is, in fact social. My data indicate that, first, social networks are one dimension and that they can be conceptualized as information pools. Second, the consideration of migration routes and chains brings out the importance not only of degrees of migration complexity but of situations along migration routes that can serve as turning points (Strauss, 1959) that affect the direction and destination points. Third, there is a manifest political dimension to these migration processes involving visa acquisition, hidden motives and purposes, and manipulation of official governmental mechanisms of refugee determination. And fourth, the issue most compatible with Maines' original formulation is strength of identification with migrants' homeland. This dimension was addressed in the data, which pertains to intentions to return to Somalia. The salience of these dimensions, I assume, would vary according to the political economic situations of specific migrating peoples. And to be sure, additional dimensions could be identified. Nonetheless, this research clearly represents an advance insofar as the generic designation of migration as a social process can now be theorized and described in more specific terms.

The issues of migration as a social process, to fully work through the implication of the concept, must, of course, consider the situation of immigrants once they are settled in a host country. The issue that most overtly presents itself in the case of Somalis in Toronto is that of racial identification and its meaning. Here, we can easily see how Herbert Blumer's (1954) treatment of race-as-a-social-definition-that-is-given-

meaning-by social structure comes into play in filling out the critical aspects of migration in general, and specifically, that of the Somali migration. With this in mind, I turn to the issue of race and identity of Somalis in Toronto.

Being Somali in Canada

In light of the above formulations, the question of Somali identity validation is raised, especially in terms of identity challenges for individual immigrants and for the community in general. These challenges arise out of the differences between the Somali and the Canadian social and structural arrangements. Somalis, as I have pointed out earlier, do not employ racially categorized identity markers, and thus racialized or ethnicized identity categories do not provide meaningful social understandings of who they are in relation to others. The social identification process in Somalia is inherently tied to that of clan differentiation which is not a racialized category system, and their national identities are lodged in what they refer to as *Somalinimo, which is regarded as an uncontested* and natural state of being. Somalis are just Somalis, and their identity is neither black, white, Asian, nor African. Moreover, color and racial differentiation do not enter into the everyday interaction and social meaning of the society. Based on the data from this study, the majority (57%) of the respondents were not aware of the existence of racialized identity categories in Canada. Even among those who said they were somewhat aware of the existence of racialized identity categories in some parts of the world did not see them as something that they experienced in their everyday experiences. Generally, therefore, the idea of race as a category of understanding social reality or as an identity marker is not available in their cultural narrative resources. Similarly, religion based identities do not provide differentiated identity category in

Somalia insofar as every one is Muslim.

These identity categories are obviously brought with Somali migrants to Canada. In other words, Somalis who have migrated to Canada also carry their identity as being "just Somali". This is clear from the data in that 76% of the respondents selected Somali as their preferred identity as opposed to Canadian-Somali. However, once in Canada, they confront a new definition of the situation. The situation in Canada is defined in terms racialized identity categories. Identities are conceptualized in Canada as either black, white, Asian, or native. Confronting this situation is brought into existence by the process of migration, which then creates the necessary condition for identity challenges and ambiguities. Accordingly, identity becomes a central issue in the adaptation process of migration. Therefore, as Maines and others have argued, migration sociologically involves the relationship between two systems of social structures involving that of the host environment and that of origination environment.

Identity becomes differentially problematic for Somalis in Canada because the two social structures do not share similar cultural and identity categories. The question, then, becomes one of whether or not identities carried from Somalia fit with the Canadian social structure. If the two levels of meaning do not fit, which is obviously what the data indicate, the idea of race, and for that matter, race relations can not be understood in the same level. That is, race and race relations are moved beyond the conventionally understood minority-majority relations where both groups collectively understand the category of the stratification. This situation fits well in Blumer's discussion of "sovereignty or Quasi sovereignty" groups, who because of their cultural principles are capable of moving the nature of race relations to a level unknown in western societies whose race relations are mainly based on color differentiation. As

Blumer (1954:20-21) points out:

> The second type of racial setting which seems to be emerging today is in the form of a relationship between racial peoples who enjoy sovereignty or quasi sovereignty...The new arrangement, which marks the breakdown of older racial arrangements, sets an intriguing question as to the kind of race relations, if any, which may develop between different racial peoples, each of whom comprises a sovereign state. Will such groups continue to conceive each other in racial terms? If so, what form are these conceptions like to take?....whatever maybe conjectures, the questions remains as to the nature of race relations between sovereign groups, particularly those that have emerged out of traditional racial order.

This statement appears to apply to the experience of the Somali community in Canada. Somalis emerged out of a traditional social order that does not recognize race as a meaningful social category. Moreover, their identity is derived from a national identity that can not be understood in terms of the conventional Western understanding of social differentiation and racial stratification. As one respondent earlier pointed out, in Somalia, different racial groups are categorized in terms of their nationality such as Germans, Italians, Arabs, and Indians. This is also confirmed by another respondent who said, "I consider myself as Somali, I don't consider myself as black, white, Chinese, or Indian. I consider myself as Somali and only Somali-that is my race." Thus, the question is what is Somali? Is it a racial designation? An ethnic identity, a nationality, or something else? For Somalis, it is just that-Somali. Of course, within the Canadian social structure, Somalis are considered as black African immigrants. But what does that mean? In other words, is race conceptualized in terms biological determinism mean anything? Or should we conceive race and racial categorization as social phenomena? Or is the conception of a group as race different from other ways in which a group can be conceived? These questions rest inside of Blumer's conception of the idea of race and racial categorizations. As Blumer (1954:5) points out:

> To conceive a group of people as a race is obviously only one of many ways in which that group can be conceived. It might be regarded as a set of dwellers, social class, a territorial group, a nation, or one of countless other groups....But it is biological grouping only in the sense that it is conceived as such by those who regard it as race-and not on the basis of established biological evidence....This definition of the term "race" serves realistically, I belief, to identity races when studying or analyzing race relations. *As a concept it requires us to go to the people themselves to see how they categorize each other...."* (emphasis added)

This dissertation has attempted to go to the people and see how they categorize themselves. The result of this endeavor, as it is clear throughout the dissertation, is that Somalis do not categorize each other on the basis of racial categories. This does not necessarily mean, though, that they are not black in terms of skin color. It only means that skin color is not a relevant category for understanding social reality among Somalis insofar as race is concerned. Therefore, for the concept race to become a meaningful category for social understanding, all parties to the interaction must share a single definition of the concept. In other words, how are we to understand the concept race if one of the groups involved in the interaction has no culturally relevant expression for the concept race? The dilemma here is, as Blumer suggests, is that "Such classifying or grouping of individuals may be made without the people actually having in their vocabulary any word that corresponds to the English word "race". (Blumer, 1954:5).

This point leads to the further assertion that racial categories are neither biological nor just a "social construction", but rather, a "situated social construction". That is, the social construction of race itself is determined by the social situation within which it is constructed. The data of this dissertation suggest that even though both the Canadian and Somali conception of race are socially constructed, the situations within which they are constructed are different, and therefore, incomprehensible to each other. This is the case insofar as for the concept race to be constructed on the basis of color categories, these color categories must be available within the demographic distribution of the society. In

other words, color classifications in Canada and in the United States are made available by the presence of groups with different skin colors. However, in the Somali situation, this demographic distribution is not available for that society. Rather, what is available in Somalia is clan distribution. Here, again, we can easily see the validity of Blumer's (1954) contention that race is only one of many ways that a group can be conceived and classified. However, my data add a further dimension to Blumer's theory by pointing out that despite the fact that race is only one of the categories that groups can be conceived and classified, these categories must be available in the social distribution of meaningful categories within that society. That is, in the case of hunting and gathering societies, none of the dimensions that Blumer provided are available, while they are available for Western societies. In between these two extremes, there are societies that have some of the categories, but not others. The data of this research, thus, point out that racial classification is not available for the Somali society, while clan classification is not available for the Canadian society. Clan differentiation, albeit a meaningful classification does not drive it's meaning from racialized and color-based categories. The Somalis, as I have mentioned earlier, do not perceive themselves in terms of black and white. The idea of being black itself does not provide a category for social understanding of reality for Somalis (see Rawls, 1996) in that categories for understanding social realities are derived through socially enacted practices. According to Rawls, Durkheim argued that the categories of understanding enter into the minds of individuals through collectively enacted practices. Of course Rawls' discussion deals with how social categories of understanding are created in the first place. But her discussion provides an interesting theoretical angle for my data in that we can assume that if some categories are not enacted in certain social situations, they do not provide a readily available category of

understanding, at least as the Somali community in Toronto is concerned. Moreover, as pointed out earlier, for race or any other category to be a meaningful category for social understanding the category within which it is based must be available for the society. If it is not, then racial categorization or any other categorization, for that matter, is not possible.

With this in mind, I now turn to one of the main questions of this dissertation: how do people that come form societies that do not employ racialized categories for social understanding deal with situations where race is the most important category for social understanding?

Although Somalis have a rather stable, non-racialized self-conceptions, their identity is somewhat challenged once they arrive in Canada due to the overwhelming existence of the Western color-based classification. That is, the structure of the host society, as mentioned earlier, is based on racial identities derived from color categories. Thus, Somalis, start to realize and become aware of the fact that the Canadian society, unlike their own, is racially and ethnically categorized. That is, they start to perceive that they are placed into identity categories that are different from the identity categories of Somalia. These identity placements, according to the immigrants' perception, take several forms. Some of them are seen to tie the respondents into racialized and devalued identity categories. Sometimes they perceive they are perceived as being helpless refugees, or as Muslims who carry non-Western values. Each category within the scheme of how respondents perceive they are perceived indicates, at least to them, a certain form of stigma and identity devaluation.[33] Given these perceived external placements of devalued

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[33] It is important, though, to note that these perceived identity devaluations are only how Somalis perceive they are perceived and not necessarily how they perceive themselves. As you may recall, the data in Chapter Six Pertaining to how Somalis perceive

identity categories, the majority of the respondents engage in a process of counter-devaluation. This counter-devaluation can be conceptualized in terms of negative valuations or total indifference towards the values and systems of the Canadian society. In other words, the majority of the respondents either see the Canadian ways of life and values as negative or are indifferent to them in that they do not pay any attention to the culture of the Canadian society insofar as race is concerned. Moreover, the respondents not only reject this perceived stigma, but also, impose their own stigma on the majority group. This counter-devaluation is possible because individuals who are labeled in a certain fashion can talk among themselves about how they are characterized and collectively engage in a process to offset that label (Blumer, 1997), and even impose their own labels on the other group. This study supports that interpretation.

This kind of perceived devaluation and counter-devaluation initiated by the lack of culturally shared collective understanding of the concept race leads to interesting forms of identity work. Identity as Stone shows, is public and structural but also has a private side to it. In other words, Somalis, given the differential structural arrangements, maintain identity work in terms of (a) their relevant public interactions with other Somalis versus with the white Canadian majority, (b) their rejection of accepting the Canadian identity, and (c) their rejection of the existence of racial discrimination. It is very important to understand these strategies, unlike Goffman's stigma management, as rejection strategies derived from the perception that the other group is perceived to harbor devalued identity towards the Somalis and vice versa.

The first point was addressed in the data, which pertains to social interaction between majority white Canadians and Somalis as reflected through whether or not

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themselves indicate that the respondents perceive themselves as having a better culture

Somali immigrants have, or are willing to have white Canadian friends. The majority of the respondents, as shown in Chapter Six, do not have any white Canadian friends with whom they associate. Individual interaction is mainly confined within the Somali community. The reasons for this lack of having White Canadian friends are varied. Some of the respondents point out to cultural reasons that do not allow them to understand each other and thus become friends with others. Others point to not having the chance to meet other individuals outside the community. This variation still comes back to the fact that individuals do not venture much beyond the confines of their community. In other words, individuals who mainly practice Somali cultural values and remain within the confines of the community will hardly encounter any friends from outside the community. In still other situations, and the one more consistent with the overall argument of the dissertation, is that some of the individuals in the community do not in fact desire to associate with white Canadians. This was clearly shown by one of the respondents in Chapter Six who provided an elaborate discussion of how he does not want to become friends with or go to the houses of white Canadians due to their unacceptable values. The second strategy is the collective rejection of the Canadian identity. This collective rejection of the Canadian identity must be seen as a strategy to remain outside the Canadian social structure. Individuals reject Canadian identity placements because if they accept them, then they become part of the racialized stratification system of the Canadian society. For these individuals, accepting a Canadian identity implies accepting also the racialized stigma that comes along with it. Thus they stick with the only option available which is to remain outside the Canadian social structure. The acceptance of host identity, again, is a situational concept in that immigrants who are very much culturally and

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than that of the Canadian society.

racially similar to the host society are likely to accept identities presented to them, while those who come from culturally and racially different backgrounds may not. This situation is determined primarily by the kind of identity placements that are available for the immigrant group and whether or not they are perceived as devalued. Thus, what Mary Waters (1990) has called ethnic options are not available for the Somali immigrants in Canada. They are forced to maintain identities derived from the home environment, or else accept a racialized identity in which case, it seems that Somalis opt for the former.

The third rejection strategy is to deny the existence of discrimination. This strategy results from both the first and second strategies in that once individuals impose their own counter-devaluation on the majority and reject the Canadian identity, then they are logically forced, at least, for purpose of consistent behavior, to reject the existence of discrimination. The point is that acknowledging the existence of discrimination would imply the acceptance of a subordinate position along with its devalued identity.

Thus, given the fact that my earlier conclusion regarding migration as social process was mainly elaborated on the basis of the pre-migration, and migration contexts, this part of my discussion connects that conclusion to the post-migration context in terms of Maines' proposition about the variation of strength of identification ties with the host environment. Again, while Maines is correct in suggesting that migration is a social process, it is again important to go beyond that general proposition and examine the process in terms of the conditions that immigrants encounter once they arrive in Canada. The data in this research indicates first of all, that the degree of identification with the host environment is tied to the kind of identities that are available for the individual or the group as a whole. If the identities available in the host environment are not culturally and structurally compatible with that of the immigrant group, the strength of identification

will be non-existent or very weak at best. Second, the degree of identification with host environment depends on whether or not the identities available for the individual or the group are stigmatized or not. If they are stigmatized, then, the strength of identification will be non-existent. The data in this dissertation indicates that the identity placements available for the Somali immigrants, be they refuge, immigrant, or black African, carry some level of stigma. Given that, the level of identification of the Somali immigrants is very weak at best. Thus, the overall conclusion of the preceding discussion is that while Maines is correct in suggesting that migration is more complex than demographers are ready to admit, his analysis did not articulate, in what aspects, it is, in fact social which is something that I hope this dissertation has achieved to certain extent.

An important dimension of this unpacking of the migration process pertains to the social nature of stigma. As indicated by the data, while Goffman's concept of stigma has provided a powerful analytical and theoretical understanding about how stigmatized individuals deal with the everyday problems attached to such spoiled identities, and "how the stigmatized person responds to his situation" (1963:9), his treatment does not go far beyond the issues of identity management. What Goffman did is to create several analytical and theoretical stigma management strategies including passing, deviance disavowal, disclaimers, and covering to account for how individuals deal with their stigmatized and/or spoiled identities. Of course, Since Goffman's (1963) classical work, research on stigma and social identities has generated some important insights into the complex relationship between stigmatized selves and social identities. For example, the legacy of Goffman's work can be found in diverse issues as the homeless (Snow and Anderson, 1991), first generation Irish immigrants (Field, 1994). Like Goffman, most of these researchers have concentrated on issues of stigma management. However, my

approach suggests that while Goffman is correct in delineating the existence of stigmatized identities, it is very important to go beyond his analysis to identify in what social and structural conditions it in fact exists. My data indicate that, first, for the concept stigma, to exist, as Goffman (163:127) himself conceded, requires the sharing of single normative expectations. What Goffman did not analyze, though, are situations where a single shared normative does not exist. In such instances, the concept stigma itself becomes irrelevant in that if the two individuals or groups do not share similar definitions of the concept stigma, then its assignment of one individual to another will be meaningless in G.H. Mead's sense of the word. The data in dissertation indicate that the Somali immigrants and the Canadian majority group do not share similar shared expectations. Specifically, this dissertation examined racialization as a category in which stigma can be assigned on the grounds that blackness in Canada and in the United States as stigmatized identities. However, for the Somali immigrants, as I have shown, blackness is not a category of social understanding and therefore is not a criterion of devaluation. The point here is that when one group uses the color "black" as an stigmatized identity towards a particular group, and if the individuals in that group do not perceive that category as stigmatizing, or even better, consider themselves strictly Somali, then the idea of stigma is not a consensual, validated category. Therefore, the conclusion regarding the preceding discussion is that for the concept of stigma to make any conceptual sense we have to go to the people and see whether or not they consider these categories as stigmatizing.[34]

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[34] Joe Feagin (1975) has shown that the poor in the United States hold many of the same stigmatizing stereotypes of themselves as do the more affluent. Handler and Hollingsworth (1971) and Cole and Lejeune (1972), furthermore show that welfare recipients incorporate stigmatizing attitudes in their views of themselves. The point is that sometimes stigma is accepted and internalized by members of a stigmatized group in

Second, the data in this dissertation indicate that the placement of stigma is a two-way process. As shown in Chapter Six, the respondents in this study stigmatize the majority Canadian group.[35] The main question here, then becomes "who stigmatizes whom?" Understanding the theoretical implication of this very simple question can provide a powerful analytical perspective within which the full implication of the process of stigma can be further theorized. Third, while Goffman's analysis was based on stigma categories and definitions derived from concepts employed by the majority, this research clearly represents an advance insofar as the process of stigma can be analyzed through the perspective of a minority group.

The final conclusion of this dissertation pertains to race and identities and how they must be conceptualized. Following Blumer (1954), I make the argument that the nature and the pattern of race and identity situations that may exist in a particular environment must be grounded within the historical, cultural, and the structural conditions that give the category its meaning. The data in this dissertation indicate that the nature and the pattern of racial and identity situations encountered by the Somali immigrants result from the particular historical and cultural homeland environment of the Somali immigrants. These include the fact that the Somali society does not employ racialized identity categories in their own homeland. This fact determines what kinds of identity categories Somalis accept, and what kind of identity categories they may reject,

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which case Goffman's emphasis on stigma management is correct. However, with the Somali immigrants in this study and with Arab immigrants (Ajrouch, 1997), though, you don't find the acceptance of stigma.

[35] Goffman (1963:138) recognizes the existence of such situation and writes: "also, it seems possible for an individual to fail to live up to what we effectively demand of him, and yet be relatively untouched by his failure; isolated by his elimination, protected by identity believes of his own, he feels he is full fledged normal human being, and that we

and which identities fit to those of the host environment and which ones do not. Furthermore, the data underscores the importance of the nature and process of migration in terms of which identities are carried and what identities are left behind. These include the kind of migration process involved including the nature of migration networks, migration routes and chains, and intention to return. Important also are the conditions in the host environment. These conditions include the nature and the pattern of identities and race relations that exist in the host society. The kind of identity and race relations encountered depends on the level of cultural similarities or dissimilarities that exist between immigrants and the host society. In short, the process of identity challenges and encounters are determined by the three levels of the process of migration, that is, the pre-migration historical processes, the process of migration itself, and finally the post-migration processes. This assertion fits well with Blumer's (1954) theory of race, and we can add identities, as social definitions that are given meaning by the social structures within which they exist. What I have shown in this dissertation is a detailed examination of the historical, cultural and structural conditions that gave rise to the nature of identity challenges and race relations that exist between the Somali immigrants in Toronto and the majority Canadian group through the eyes of the Somali immigrants.

Contributions to the Literature

The first major contributions of this study involves a reconceptualization of the process of migration from a mere physical relocation to a social process that embodies both bodies and selves simultaneously into the process of migration. The importance of perceiving migration as a social process is that it provides an understanding of the

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are the ones who are not quite human." However, he did not go far beyond this

conditions and the overall interaction processes including identities as well the nature and the pattern of race relations that may appear between an immigrant group and a host society. It also further advances Maines' proposition that migration is a social process by specifying in what respects, it is in fact social.

This dissertation further provides much needed empirical data for Blumer's theory of race relations in that it specifically delineates the structural conditions within which the concept race achieves its meaning. Equally important is the contribution of this dissertation to the reconceptualization of Goffman's (1963) classic concept of stigma. The present study contributes to that literature by pointing out that in order for the concept stigma to make a full theoretical meaning, situations where individuals and groups do not share similar normative values must be examined. Furthermore, unlike Goffman, who conceptualized the concept from the perspective of the majority group, this study is based on the perspective of the minority, and the raises the question, "who stigmatizes whom". This question, if properly understood, can provide a powerful analytical and theoretical advancement to our understanding of stigma and social identities.

In terms of the literature pertaining to the distinction between refugees and immigrants my findings support those who have argued that refugee versus immigrants is not a clear cut sociological distinction. This is true insofar as economic motives can not be truly distinguished from political motives, especially, when a country is economically less endowed and is experiencing political upheavals. Moreover, this dissertation has shown that even in terms adaptation characteristics, and in light of the data, refugees can not be distinguished from immigrants. The final contribution of this dissertation pertains

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generalized proposition.

to African immigrants in Canada. This research represents one of the first, if not, the first study that examines the process of migration and identity challenges among African immigrants in Canada. As such, it will provide a much needed basis for the future understanding of African immigrants in Canada.

Implications for Future Research

The directions for future research is in part derived from the limitations of this study. First, in order to fully explicate the experience of African immigrants in North America, a comparison of immigrants from several different African nations to the West should be carried out. Such an undertaking may shed some light into whether or not the Somali experience is different from immigrants of other African countries. Furthermore, given the fact that the population of the African continent is quite diverse both in terms cultural and colonial experiences, such a comparison will take into account the different conditions of the original homelands, as well as the host environment. For example, one question that can be asked in this comparative research may be whether or not African immigrants that come from Christian based faiths do in fact assimilate more than those that come from the Islamic faith. Another factor may be the degree of colonial experience. Another equally important research agenda may be a comparative study both in terms of the home and host environments. Such an agenda should compare the experiences of several African immigrant groups in several different Western countries. This endeavor can, in fact, shed some light on the impact of different host conditions on immigrants groups. As for the Somali experience, a comparative research of Somali immigrants in Canada and the United States should be carried.

Another important limitation of this study pertains to sampling and sample size.

The sample size in this study was fairly small. Therefore, future research must consider a larger sample size. Also along with the increased sample size, sampling parameters need to be better determined. An important note to mention here is that the 1995 Canadian census will be published by next year. This census is very important in that it was taken when almost all the Somalis who are currently in Canada have already arrived. This was not the case for he 1990 census at which time no significant Somali population existed in Canada. A larger sample size will also provide further support for the social nature of migration. In other words, larger sample size will provide more detailed information regarding migration chains and routes, which further lend more support for the idea of migration as a social process.

Another direction for future research may involve understanding gender relations within the Somali community in Canada. For example, the Somali society is highly gender differentiated and segregated in Somalia. One important question may be how does that form of gender relations persist or change for Somali immigrants to Western countries?

Finally, since the number of African immigrants in North America is increasing, research involving relations between African immigrants and African Americans should be carried out. Specifically, a very important research undertaking may be to examine the degree of mutual identification and alienation between African Americans and African immigrants. Moreover, research on African immigrants may shed some into the early experiences of African Americans in the United States.

APPENDIX A

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY STATEMENT ON PATIENT INFORMED CONSENT

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE: I am being asked to participate in a research study concerning the process of migration and ethnic identity adjustment among the Somali refugees in Toronto, Canada. This study shall examine how the Somali refugees identify with the values of their ethnic group and with those of the Canadian culture.

PROCEDURE: I agree to participate in focus group interviews or in-depth life history interviews at an agreed upon location. I also agree to have this interview tape-recorded.

RISKS/SIDE EFFECTS: The only risk is if my name were revealed publicly. Given that all interviews will be kept anonymous, this risk is extremely minimal. Also, these interviews will be kept under lock and key and once transcribed the tapes will be destroyed.

BENEFITS: I will contribute to the body of literature concerning ethnic relations in the modern social world and provide helpful information to those interested in the process of immigration of African Refugees/immigrants, and Somalis in particular.

COST OF PARTICIPATION: None.

COMPENSATION: In the event of or, unlikely event of any injury resulting from the research study, no reimbursement, compensation, or free medical care is offered by Wayne State University.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION WITHDRAWAL: I can withdraw from the interview at any time. If at any time during the interview I do not wish to continue, Mr. Kusow will turn off the tape recorder without questions and give me the notes he has taken if I wish to obtain them.

QUESTIONS: If I have any questions concerning my participation in this study now or in the future, Mr. Abdi M. Kusow, or one of his associates can be contacted at (313) 577-2930, Department of Sociology, Wayne State University. And, if I have any questions regarding my rights as a research subject, Dr. P.A. Lichtenberg, chairman of the behavioral Investigation committee can be contacted at (313) 577-5174.

CONFIDENTIALITY: My interview with Mr. Kusow will be strictly confidential and be transcribed under an anonymous name in his computer. My interview will be under lock and key and only available to Mr. Kusow. After Mr. Kusow has transcribed my interview he will destroy the tape.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY: I have read or had read to me all the above information about this research study, including the research procedure, possible risks, and the likelihood of any benefits to me. The content and meaning of this information has been explained and is understood. All my questions have been answered. I hereby consent and voluntarily offer to follow the study requirements and take part in the study. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

_____ Date: _____

Signature of the interviewee

_____ Date: _____

Investigator

APPENDIX B

Life History Interview Schedule: The Somali Community in Toronto, Canada

I. Life in Somalia and the Pre-migration Process

1. In Somalia, did you ever think about issues of religion such as Islam and Christianity?

2. What did you consider yourself ethnically when you were in Somalia?

3. In Somalia, did you ever think about issues of race or ethnicity?

4. Where did you leave in Somalia and how long?

5. What kind of job did you have in Somalia?

II. Exit Routes, and the Migration Processes

6. What year did you leave Somalia and why?

7. Would you have ever left Somalia, if it were not because of the civil war?

8. Did you live or work in a country other than Somalia prior to your arrival to Canada?

9. Did you migrate with other family members or alone?

10. Who helped you financially to immigrate to Canada?

11. How long did you think about migrating to Canada?

12. Why did you select Canada?

13. Did you hear anything about Canada or America prior to your arrival?

14. What did you anticipate before you came to Canada?

III. Life in Canada and the Post-migration Process

A. Ethnicity and Identity

15. What do you think is the perception that Canadians have about Somalis?

16. What is your perception of Canadians?

17. Since Canadians perceive Somalis as--- what is your perception of yourself?

18. Did you receive any assistance from the Canadian society upon your arrival?

19. Did you experience any problem practicing your religion while in Canada?

20. When a form or a survey asks you about your ethnicity what do you put down?

    1. Somali 2. African 3. Muslim 4. Other

21. Have you experienced any discrimination since you came to Canada?

22. If so, what actions have you taken against discrimination?

23. Did any of your children talk about racial issues encountered outside the home and what was your reaction?

24. Do you think you will ever consider yourself Canadian, if not why?

B. Cultural and Homeland Ties

25. Do you think you will ever go back to Somalia?

26. Do you help some of your relatives back home and how?

27. How often do you communicate with relatives in Somalia?

28. Can you compare your life in Canada with the one you had in Somalia prior to the war?

C. Community Issues and Problems of Every Day Life in Canada

29. What do you think is the biggest problem that is facing the Somali community in Toronto today?

30. I hear that, at least, a large number of the Somali community organizations in Toronto are based on tribal affiliations, what do you think of that?

31. I hear that most Somalis select their friends and associates form those of their Clans?

32. What do you think of Canadian/North American Culture such TV programs?

33. What is the most important difference between Canadian and Somali culture?

34. Do you think you can adapt to Canadian norms and values?

D. Family and Gender Relations in Canada and in Somalia

35. I hear that there are some problems between Somali couples in Canada, what do you know about that, and what do you think are the causes of such problems? Have you experienced this problem yourself?

36. Can you tell me something about how gender relations are practiced in Somalia?

37. How are gender relations different in Canada from those in Somalia?

38. Which one do you think is more appropriate for the Somali community in Canada?

39. Would you allow your daughter or son to marry someone outside the Somali Community?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW #_____

Socio-Demographic Questions: Life History Participants

The following questions are intended to collect some personal and other relevant information. Please answer all questions.

Date_____ Time_____ Location_____

1. Name._____

2. What do you consider yourself? 0. Canadian 1. Somali

3. Would you like to go back to Somalia? 0. Yes 1. No

4. Have you ever experienced discrimination? 0. Yes 1. No

5. Do you prefer to be considered as?

1. Refugee 2. Immigrant 3. Minority 4. Somali 5. Other

6. Have you been able to find a job that matches you qualifications?
0. Yes 1. No

7. How many countries did you go through before coming to Canada?_____

8. When did you migrate from Somalia? Year _____

9. Gender: 0. Male 1. Female

10. Current age ____ 11. Age at migration_____

12. Occupation: 1.Un-skilled 2. Skilled 3. Professional
4. Unemployed 5. Student 6. Other____

13. Education: 1. Less than High School 2. High school
3. College degree 4. Masters
5. Ph.D.

14. City of birth_____ 10. Type: 0. Urban 1. Rural

15. Income: 1. 0-9,999 2. 10,00-19,999
3. 20,000-39,999 4. 40,000-59,999
5. 60,000- 69,999 6. 70,000 and over

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ABSTRACT

MIGRATION AND IDENTITY PROCESSES AMONG SOMALI IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA

by

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May 1998

Advisor: Dr. David R. Maines

Major: Sociology

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

This dissertation represents a study of migration processes of Somalis to Canada, and as such, it seeks to contribute to knowledge about the adjustment processes of relocation. The theoretical concepts within which the discussion of this dissertation is based are mainly derived from symbolic interactions. Thirty in-depth interviews from Somali immigrants and refugees in Toronto, Canada constituted the primary data. The data from the Somali immigrants from Toronto indicate that the process of migration intrinsically involves identity challenges and transformations. This process further raises questions about the nature of identity challenges and race relations that these individuals encounter once they arrive in Canada. Descriptive analysis of this process led to two main conclusions. The first conclusion pertains to the assertion that the process of migration must be seen as a social process above and beyond the physical movement. This social process of migration brings forth a contact between two hitherto unfamiliar groups to each other. The data pertaining to this question points out that Somalis do not employ radicalized identity categories, and thus racialized or ethnicized identity

categories do not provide meaningful categories of social understanding. The second conclusion pertains to the nature of race relations that may result from such an encounter. In light of the above formulation, this dissertation asserts that the idea of race relation, at least, as it pertains to that between Somali immigrants and the Canadian majority group, raises the question who stigmatizes whom?

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